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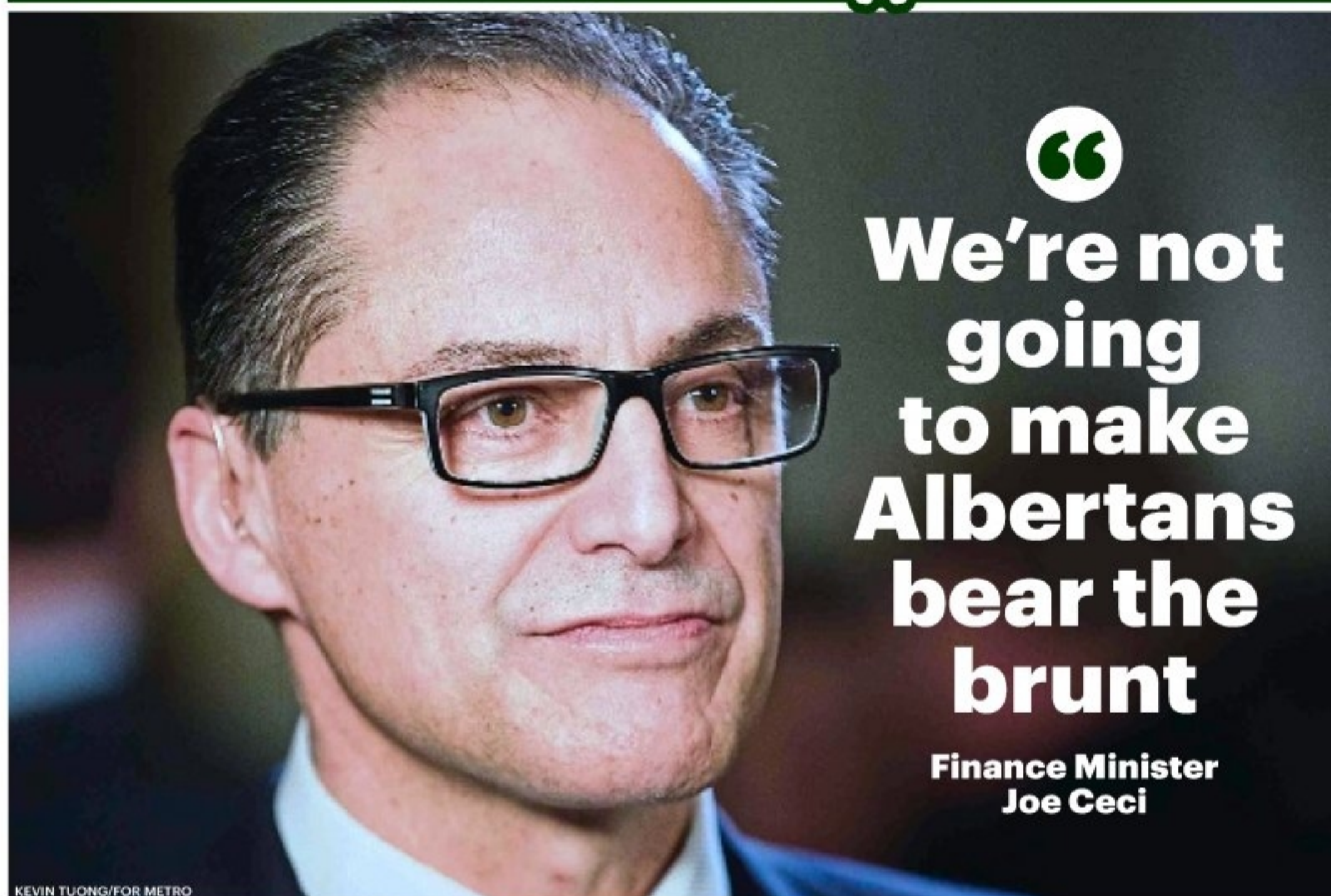
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ALBERTA'S  2017 BUDGET



KEVIN TUONG/FOR METRO

“
**We're not
going
to make
Albertans
bear the
brunt**

Finance Minister
Joe Ceci

PROVINCIAL DEBT

**Alberta
going \$71.1B
into the red**

HEALTH

**\$45M for
mental health,
addiction to
fight opioids**

POST-SECONDARY

**Tuition freeze
extended
another year**

**Plus more on
Alberta Budget 2017**

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Provincial debt triples since 2015

\$71B

ECONOMY

Metro digs into Alberta Budget 2017



Lucie Edwardson
Metro | Calgary

Alberta's debt is on track to hit \$45 billion by year's end, and expected to reach \$71.1 billion dollars by 2019-20, according to the provincial budget tabled Thursday by Finance Minister Joe Ceci.

This would put Alberta's debt to GDP ratio at 10.5 per cent — more than tripling it since 2015.

When asked how Albertans should feel about this — considering they ran on the platform of keeping these numbers low — finance minister Joe Ceci said he thinks Albertans will “feel some gratitude” at his government's commitment to maintain “important programs and services required whether it's a recession or not.”

“They'll feel like we're not using this recession like previous governments have done to severely cut back on programs and services to make it problematic for teachers to stay employed in this province. That makes it problematic for nurses to stay

in this province — when severe cuts in both those areas were attributed to downturns in the past,” he said.

The 2017-18 deficit is estimated to sit around \$10.3 billion. No tax adjustments will take place.

Ceci said Albertans will still have a tax advantage “over every other province” with \$8.7 billion budgeted this year.

“This is an attractor for businesses when it's an affordability issue for Albertans. We're not going to make them bear the brunt of this downturn,” said Ceci.

“We're going to do things like we are now that say Alberta believes in you and we're going to carry this as a bit of a shock absorber until we get to the point the diversification starts

to pay off, the economy starts to show more green and they stay working that entire time.”

Ceci said Alberta's population is still growing despite an economic downturn caused by lower oil prices. Cutting services and deferring capital projects would hurt the economy in the short term and jeopardize prosperity in the long run, he said.

The province is investing heavily in tax credits and other financial incentives to diversify the economy and get off what it calls the “oil and gas rollercoaster.”

A new carbon tax, launched in January, is expected to bring in \$5.4 billion over the next three years to be reinvested in green projects, from energy-efficient light bulbs for homeowners to new rapid transit lines.

The budget's forecasts all hinge on oil prices hitting US\$68 a barrel by 2020. The bellwether West Texas Intermediate price is currently just under US\$49 — a long way from the US\$93 a barrel averaged until 2014, when prices cratered before slowly beginning to rebound in 2016.

Ceci said Alberta's economy is expected to lead the way in Canada with a growth rate of 2.6 per cent in 2017. Global economic growth is pegged at 3.5 per cent.

“Substantial risks remain,” warns the government's budget analysis. “Weaker-than-forecast global growth would harm Alberta's revenue forecast, as oil prices would remain lower for longer.”

WITH FILES FROM THE CANADIAN PRESS AND JEREMY SIMES/METRO EDMONTON

The reviews are in on budgetary plans



Brian Jean

“This is an NDP budget fantasy stuffed with more of the same economic experiments that have failed Alberta for two years straight. They're doubling down on a high tax, high-debt agenda that will cost families thousands of dollars every year and suffocate our economy's ability to create the jobs it's capable of.”

Brian Jean, Wildrose Leader



Michelle Draper

“Our student population continues to increase and today's announcement acknowledges that, with a commitment to fund enrolment growth. We hope the infrastructure spending details next week will help address Edmonton Public Schools' pressing need for new schools, replacement schools and school modernization.”

Michelle Draper, Edmonton Public Schools board chair



Adam Legge

“Hope is not a strategy. What businesses mainly want is for government to not make it any harder to survive in these challenging times, and this budget shows us there is clearly no plan to make it easier.”

Adam Legge, president and CEO of the Calgary Chamber



Mark Ramsankar

“Classrooms are overcrowded and students with special needs require greater support. School boards have the funding available to hire the teachers and educational assistants that are urgently needed.”

Mark Ramsankar, Alberta Teachers Association president

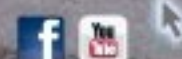
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OTHER WAYS THE ALBERTA BUDGET COULD AFFECT YOU

Funding announced for schools and First Nations drinking water

JEREMY SIMES METRO



TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

1 Education

The budget has \$500 million set aside for 26 new school projects — meaning new schools or upgrading old ones—across the province, including four new schools in Edmonton and five in Calgary. More details about locations will be released next week. This comes weeks after the province announced plans to cut school fees by 25 per cent through the introduction of Bill 1, and to create a new \$3.5 million school lunch pilot last year.



TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

2 Drinking water

The province is committing to make sure every household on an Alberta First Nation has access to clean drinking water. The province plans to invest \$100 million to integrate existing drinking-water systems with federal ones.

"By building these links between communities, we can end the long-standing and shameful number of boil-water advisories on First Nations," Finance Minister Joe Ceci said Thursday.



ANDY DEAN PHOTOGRAPHY

3 Health care

The province is hoping to rein in health care spending by signing a new deal with doctors, the details of which were released in the budget. Officials say the changes, which include altering fee-for-service models and sharing data using online tools, would make health care more community focused, while saving \$400 million this year.

Despite the savings, health care spending is still up 3.2 per cent this year, which is at least less than the province's historic spending growth rate of six per cent.



KEVIN TUONG/FOR METRO

4 Tuition

The province is extending the tuition freeze for universities and other post secondary institutions for one more year, which is good news for those who pay tuition. However, the province won't be providing "backfill" money to universities, meaning funds earmarked to cover the cost of the freeze.

However, universities will be getting \$6 billion this year, which will cover staff positions, student loans and other grant programs.

5 Property tax

The budget had good news for (almost) anyone who pays property taxes. The budget revealed that the province is either freezing or reducing the provincial education tax for the majority of Albertans. The one exception? Edmonton.

The tax, which funds 31 per cent of school board budgets, will be frozen in Calgary and jump six per cent in the capital city. The tax is added to your property tax bill every year and varies on the value of your home.

The rationale, according to the province, is Edmonton is seeing rising property values compared with the rest of Alberta.



JENNIFER GAUTHIER/METRO



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EDUCATION

Half of schools requested will be built

Lucie Edwardson
Metro | Calgary

The Calgary Board of Education says the funding announced to build five new schools in the city, issued in the provincial budget on Thursday, won't meet the requests they've made in their capital plan.

Bowen-Eyre said that the CBE capital plan asked for funding to 31 projects over three years.

"That doesn't come close to what we've asked for," she said.

These five new Calgary schools are in addition to the four new schools — and one gymnasium at Nelson Mandela high school — in

the CBE, as well as the three schools in the Calgary Catholic School District (CCSD), all of which will open in the fall of 2017.

The three-year capital plan for the CBE, signed off on by the board of trustees on Tuesday, calls for funding for eight new schools in 2017-18. Meanwhile, the CCSD's capital plan requested funding for

three new schools in 2017-18.

Between the two, school boards are asking for eleven additional schools — meaning more than half of new schools requested by the boards will go unbuilt.

The planning and building of new schools has been budgeted at \$32 million in 2017-18 and will take about four years to complete.



Mayor Naheed Nenshi said parts of the 2017 provincial budget come as no surprise. HELEN PIKE/METRO

Red light on Green Line

CITY HALL

Provincial LRT funding stayed for the moment

Brodie Thomas
Metro | Calgary

Albertans were warned that the budget wouldn't have a lot of goodies.

So it comes as no surprise that Calgary's ask of \$1.4 billion for the province's share of the Green Line was not included in Thursday's Budget.

"I wasn't really expecting it," said Mayor Naheed Nenshi. "This is one where I'm willing to give the province more time to figure this out."

He also noted that there appears to be a billion dollars from the carbon levy set aside for transit, and he suspects that these funds will go to Calgary and Edmonton's transit.

Transportation Minister Brian Mason told reporters the lines of communication are open between his office and the mayor's on the Green Line.

"We're certainly going to sit down with them as soon

as we have a specific and concrete proposal to consider," said Mason.

Nenshi called this a business-as-usual budget for Calgary.

He gave the province points for its commitment to Airport Trail, which will be a major east-west link between Deerfoot Trail and Stoney Trail.

He was also pleased to see a commitment to building an interchange on Deerfoot Trail at 212 Avenue South.

"That will really help us ease congestion in SE Calgary as well as open a bit more land for development there," he said.

But he scolded the government for not responding to a request to increase the Alberta Media Fund, which offers funding for movies and book, music and magazine projects.

"Instead of increasing the fund from \$36.8 million to \$50 million, they seem to have cut it to \$29 million, which is really strangling a very important industry in a growth phase, here in the province, very early on."

He also noted a lack of funding for affordable housing. The federal government is expected to announce major funding for affordable housing in its budget next week.

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Opioid battle gets cash infusion

PROVINCIAL BUDGET

Advocate cheers support for addiction, mental health



Elizabeth Cameron
For Metro | Calgary

After losing her partner to a fentanyl overdose last year, Rosalind Davis said she was pleased the provincial budget earmarked a \$45-million increase for addiction and mental health supports to combat Alberta's opioid crisis.

"It's really great news, it's definitely needed," said Rosalind Davis, who lost her partner Nathan Huggins-Rosenthal to a fentanyl overdose in 2016.

She said the cash should be used to ensure immediate, comprehensive treatment and

resources are available to those suffering from an addiction.

"People who are suffering from opioid addictions are going to come into contact with the (health) system at various points. Those are opportunities that need to be utilized to engage people with treatment, and we need to be able to provide immediate access to medical treatments, such as opioid replacement therapy," Davis said.

Nathan's life could have been saved if he had received timely treatment for his addiction, initially sparked by a prescribed painkiller, according to Davis.

"When there are solutions (that exist), it's heartbreaking to know you lost a loved one because those weren't in place," she said. "Any delay in accessing (addiction) treatment is potentially sending someone to a death sentence."

On paper, 343 people died

BY THE NUMBERS

\$6M

in emergency funding from Ottawa announced last week to help address Alberta's opioid crisis

\$45M

overall increase for addiction and mental health supports announced in 2017 provincial budget

from fentanyl-related overdoses in the first three-quarters of 2016, although advocates suspect the actual number of opioid-related deaths is much higher.

During his speech on Thursday, Finance Minister Joe Ceci

said community-based care and better co-ordination between hospitals and community resources will be prioritized.

The Valuing Mental Health Report, published in 2015, called for a leadership team to be established to address the crisis and co-ordinate the various government ministries involved.

Part of the provincial increase will be allocated to implement the report's recommendations, according to Ceci.

Earlier this month, the federal government also announced \$6 million in emergency funding for Alberta's opioid crisis. Health Minister Sarah Hoffman's office confirmed the creation of supervised consumption sites and improving access to opioid replacement therapy are top priorities.

Alberta Health's 2017-18 expenses are budgeted for \$21.4 billion, a 3.2 per cent increase over last year.



Last year, the provincial government made Naloxone kits, which can temporarily reverse an overdose, available to anyone at no cost from Alberta pharmacies. JENNIFER FRIESEN/FOR METRO



EDUCATION

Students, administrators satiated by budget, but hungry for more



University of Calgary president Elizabeth Cannon said she's happy with the stable funding they're receiving from the province. METRO FILE



Helen Pike
Metro | Calgary

The Alberta budget confirms while students enjoy their third tuition freeze, post-secondary institutions won't see support in the form of a "backfill."

There's nothing new, or unusual in the budget according to stakeholders.

But students and administrators aren't up in arms about the continued freeze yet, as they're hoping the tuition review will have answers and bring better funding models for post-secondary for years to come.

"We're seeing a continuation of a lot of the funding and programs we very much value,

which is great," said Dexter Bruneau, chair of the Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS).

He said from how the consultations are going, it's clear the government is committed to taking the tuition freeze off gently, and won't be leaving students with a drastic swing in costs as schools try to regain any revenue shifts.

"The government is very much committed to not having that kind of massive increase after the freeze," Bruneau said.

What was a welcome surprise, according to Mount Royal University chief financial officer Duane Anderson, was the two per cent increase in post-secondary institution's base operating grants.

"It's nice to have that increase," Anderson said. "We're still net ahead but not as far ahead as we could have been if we received the backfill funding."

University of Calgary president Elizabeth Cannon said the government continues to fulfil their promise of predictable and stable funding with this budget.

She said at the U of C they assumed backfill wasn't coming, and built that into their budgetary deliberations, meaning she's confident there won't be cuts based on the cash flow.

"The consultation process that's ongoing right now, where all stakeholders are at the table talking about a policy that will really serve us well as a prov-



We're still net ahead but not as far ahead as we could have been if we received the backfill funding.

Duane Anderson

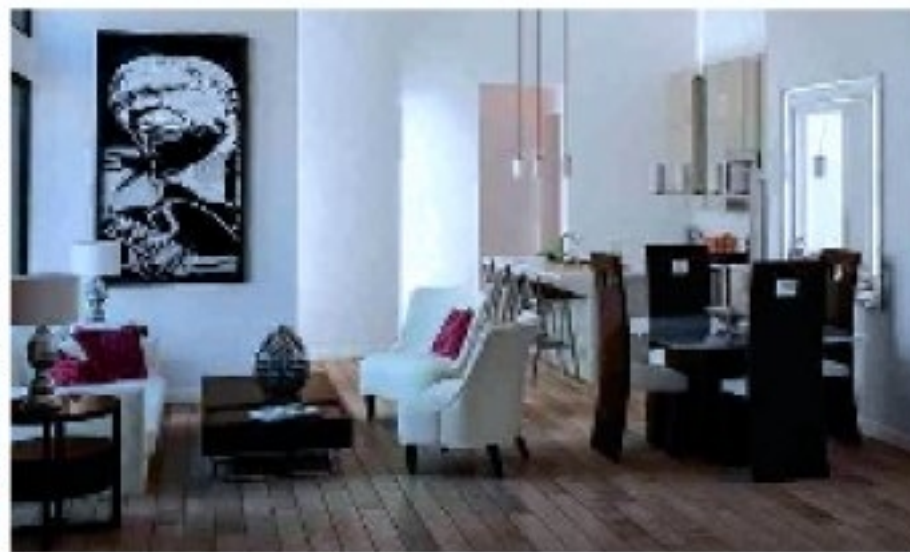
ince for the long term, is needed, and will be welcome," Cannon said.

For Calgary, the budget brings some much-needed infrastructure cash, money from \$270 million in funding to continue work on the MacKimmie Complex at the U of C.



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Skepticism of FAT FREEZING treatment justified

Roberta Segar



Fat is the enemy of every man and woman who ever wanted to look their best in form fitting clothes or without their clothes. Many people have stubborn pockets of fat that simply do not respond to diet or exercise. Until recently liposuction was the only option, but now there are several non-surgical alternatives that claim to reduce localized fat non-invasively. Most do not work very well. Others do not work at all or deliver results that are only temporary.

We all want to believe the claims but we are wise to be skeptical. Let the buyer beware, as they say. If you are considering having non-surgical body contouring, I want to tell you that of all the options available, nothing works better than CoolSculpting®. But don't take my word for it! Examine the evidence! **READ MORE >**

Skinpossible.ca/coolsculpting-calgary

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worth it" review or someone claiming it didn't work for them. Let me explain why this is.

Firstly, as with all treatments, CoolSculpting® results do vary from person to person. Some people respond better than others and unfortunately there are a few poor responders and a very rare non-responder. Justifiably, a few people are disappointed with their results, but on the flip side, most are satisfied and many are delighted.

The most common reason for the few reviews that claim the treatment didn't work has nothing to do with the treatment at all. It has to do with the simple fact that what the eye doesn't see every day, the brain forgets. Prior to a CoolSculpting® procedure weight is measured and photos are taken from various angles. After the treatment the fat clears gradually over a couple of months and by the time people return to the clinic for post-treatment photos, sometimes they

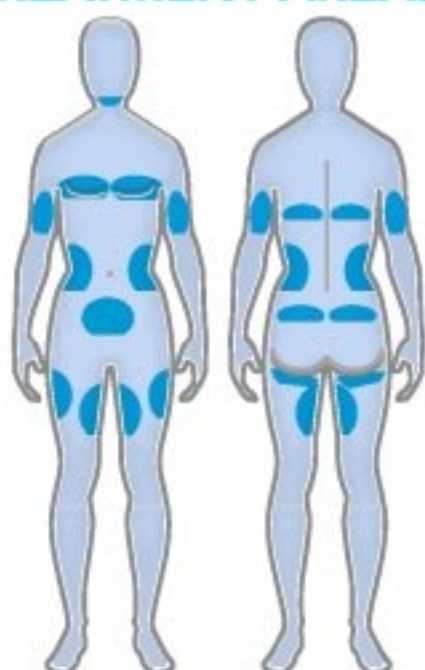
have forgotten what they looked like before. The photos almost always leave them convinced and happy, so I can't help but wonder if many of the unsatisfied reviews are written by people who did not return to the treatment provider to see their before and after comparisons.

The proof of CoolSculpting's safety and efficacy is in the 70+ clinical studies that validate its effectiveness. Yup! The other's might have a study or two, maybe three, but CoolSculpting® has over seventy! The clinical evidence consistently speaks for itself.

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On-It 'lowballing' regional transit

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Expert says more stops, time could buoy ridership



Helen Pike
Metro | Calgary

As On-It chugs along, passing the five-month mark in their two-year pilot, one expert is saying they could do more to rally ridership, but are limited by the population they serve.

So far, the first five months of On-It's pilot are going "as planned" they have consistently seen daily riders increase since they started.

Ettore Iannacito, Regional Transit Program Manager with the Calgary Regional Partnership, said the \$664,000 pilot anticipated uptake to last about a year and for service to ramp up and shine in the second year. Ultimately for it to be a success the service has to reach more than 90 riders a day.

"It's doing exactly as planned, if not a little bit better," Iannacito said. "We're carrying, on average, 50 riders per day, and we started with 10."

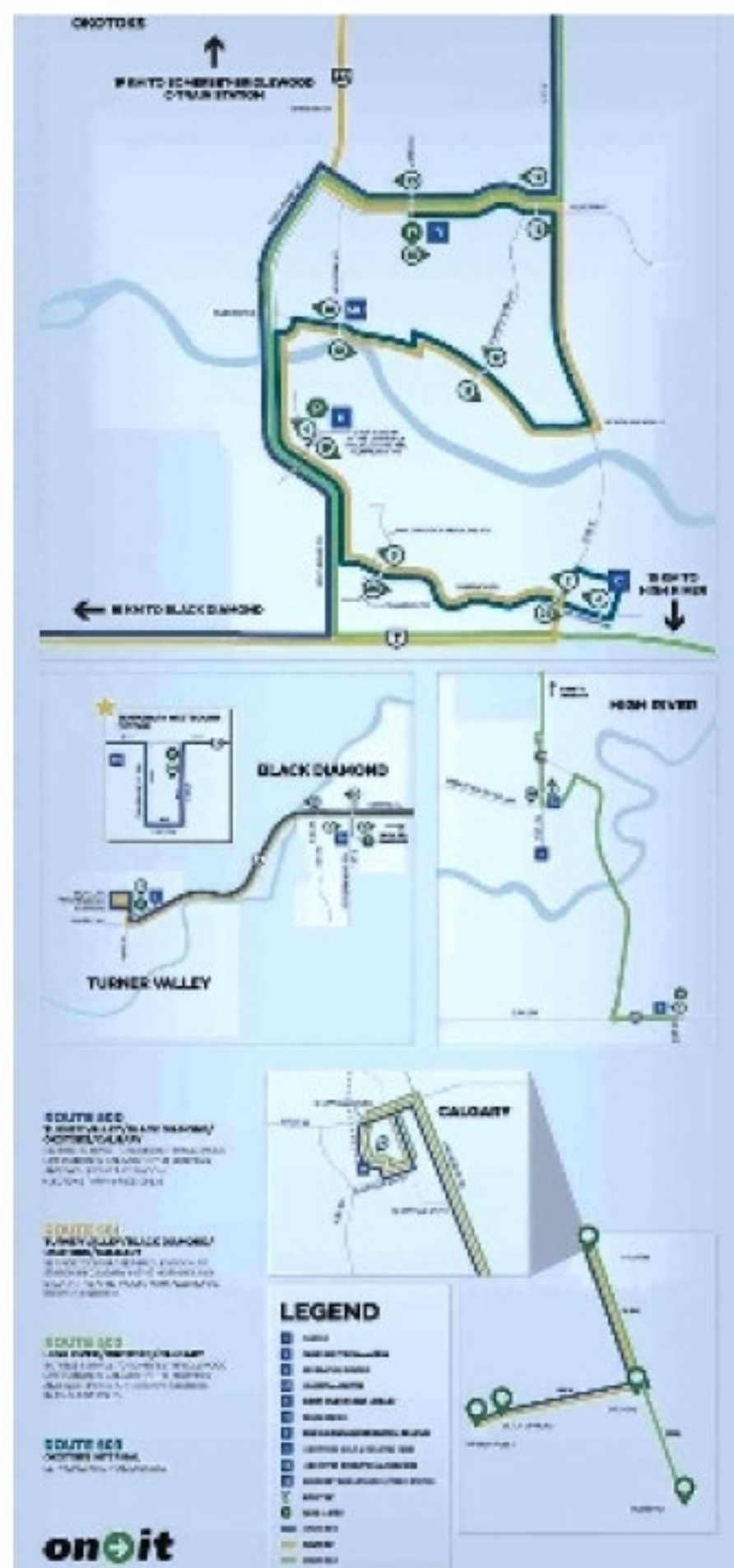
Willem Klumpenhower, a PhD candidate in transportation engineering at the University of Calgary said he believes it's worth the investment to try out a transit service, but if the CRP is really trying to plant the regional transit seed they need more frequent service.

"It's hard to schedule it for people," Klumpenhower said. "What do you do if you miss that bus back, or the train is delayed, right? It stops a lot of people from doing it."

He pointed out that there's a cap to the number of riders On-It can attract, which is theoretically the number of people in the areas the system serves who also work in Calgary — and who find the timeslots On-It offers convenient.

On-It has been offering passengers free rides to help get the word out on their weekday service from Black Diamond, High River, Okotoks and Turner Valley and Iannacito said that small upfront investment has seen grand returns.

"It was all meant to be a strategy to get people to try the service," Iannacito said. "The cost of doing that was so minimal in terms of how many people we got — we almost tripled the ridership for the month of January."



This map indicates where On-It transit currently services its rural transit riders. CONTRIBUTED

+ NEXT STOP: BANFF

As the newly launched On-It transit buses sit idle over the weekend, the Calgary Regional Partnership is looking to the mountains to expand their service this summer.

The board has already voted in favour of launching a service to get people from the city to Banff on weekends at a revenue-neutral model for 10 to 12 weeks.

"It's just kind of at a conceptual stage," said Ettore Iannacito Regional

Transit Program Manager. "We think it's going to work extremely well, and if it does work out we still have the ability to continue the service on weekends — maybe there's demand in the winter time for ski trips."

This year being Canada's sesquicentennial, CRP figured the more options to get to the parks, the better.

"All the national parks are free to get into, and we thought there might be demand for service," Iannacito said.

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Colony of endangered bats found

WILDLIFE

Researchers make surprise discovery in boreal forest



Matt Kieltyka
Metro | Edmonton

Researchers in Alberta have stumbled on a large population of endangered bats in the boreal forest that could be critical for conservation efforts.

White nose syndrome has wreaked havoc on bat populations in the eastern U.S. and Canada (mortality rates are as high as 95 per cent) and was discovered in Washington state for the first time last year.

Biologists fear it's just a matter of time before the deadly fungus reaches Alberta's bats.

So finding a cluster of more than 200 Little Brown Myotis bats in a newly explored area of the northern forest, far from their usual hibernation site in the Rocky Mountains, was a big deal for the Wildlife Conservation Society Canada (WCS) and



Wildlife biologist Dave Hobson said monitoring bat populations is a key issue for conservation. COURTESY DAVE HOBSON

Alberta Environment and Parks scientists.

"Because of white nose syndrome coming into the States and Canada, we're trying to get a handle on where our bats are. We can't protect them if we don't

know where they are," said Dave Critchley, the Alberta co-ordinator of WCS's BatCaver program.

"If you think about caves and where they typically are, it's usually the mountains, especially any that have bats currently. So

seeing this in the spruce-covered forest, wow, that's a totally different expectation."

In fact, the undisclosed cave (its location is being withheld to protect the bats) is now the third largest known hibernation

site for this species of bats in the entire province.

Critchley said researchers only know where about 10 per cent of bats go to hibernate in the winter, so discovering new clusters can help scientists monitor

conditions, get a better sense of their population and watch out for signs of white nose syndrome.

A healthy bat population is vital for pest control, said Alberta Environment and Parks senior wildlife biologist Dave Hobson.

"Bats have an important role to play in the environment," he said. "They eat a lot of night-flying insects, which are often pests — moths and beetles — and the loss of that population would have big economic impacts on agriculture and forestry."

Hobson said there isn't much the government can do about white nose syndrome, so monitoring bat populations is key.

"The only thing we can do to slow its spread is to prevent human visitation to these caves or make sure those people have clean equipment and clothing," he said.

The fungus kills by waking bats from their hibernation early, before there are any insects out for them to eat. Human disturbance can have a similar effect.

"It's estimated that a single arousal event uses up to 60 days worth of stored energy," he said. "We won't want people to start going to these caves in the winter and disturbing these bats."



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Nenshi, Bettman don't see eye-to-eye

DEVELOPMENT

Mayor still standing firm on not funding new arena



Brodie Thomas
Metro | Calgary

NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman met with Mayor Na-

heed Nenshi earlier this week, and the two had a "cordial and candid discussion of different views."

Nenshi said Bettman made the offer to be a facilitator between the city and the Flames on the topic of a new arena.

"I'm not 100 per cent sure it would be all that helpful," said the mayor.

"I told him if we need him, we'll call him."

Bettman was in town to

boost the idea of a new arena for the Calgary Flames.

The commissioner spoke at a Calgary luncheon on Wednesday, where he praised Edmonton's Rogers Place arena, and took a swipe at the Saddledome.

"No knock on (the Saddledome), but it's old, and the ways these buildings get built has changed dramatically since this one was built back in the early '80s," said Bettman.

The city has said unequivocally that the Flames original proposal for the city's East Village, CalgaryNEXT, is not the best option.

Instead they've been promoting a "Plan B" which would involve an area near the current Saddledome in Victoria Park.

Nenshi said no matter where the arena might go, he's heard loud and clear from Calgarians that they don't want their tax dollars funding the

Public money must be spent for public benefit.

Mayor Naheed Nenshi

project.

"It's interesting that the calls to our office — and the emails — have been 99.99997 per cent saying, 'Please Mr.

Bettman, stay out of this,' and 'No, there should be no public money for this.'"

Nevertheless, he left the door open for some sort of contribution from the city.

"Public money must be spent for public benefit. If we can figure out a way there's public benefit, in an interesting project in Victoria Park, we'll take that to the citizens and see what they think," he said.



Akeam Francis opened up TheSmileShop to give donated household items to families in need. JENNIFER FRIESEN/FOR METRO

CHARITY

Man with million-smile mission opens free store



Jennifer Friesen
For Metro

They say laughter is contagious, and one Calgary man is boiling it down to smiles.

Akeam Francis' goal is simple: Make someone's day better. And now, every Saturday in Rundle, he does that 100 times over by handing over clothing, books, household items and even beds in exchange for nothing more than a smile.

"That's how TheSmileShop works," the 23-year-old said with his trademark grin. "The idea is that we can grow the community trust with people, because a lot of families need stuff, and a lot of families have stuff. Why not give them a central spot to come in and just have what they need?"

Francis started the mission in January, and said he usually sees more than 100 people come through the doors every week.

The donations have piled in, with the garage behind the King of Glory Lutheran Church packed to the max with dishes, shoes and car seats.

There's no limit to what people take and what people donate, but Francis said he only asks that people "shop with integrity."

"This is by the community, for the community," he said. "But we

haven't really had any problems with people taking advantage. People are very respectful, they can see that it's free for all, but it's not a free-for-all. It's about taking what you need and being a part of the community."

TheSmileShop is the latest project of Francis' first brainchild: SmileGang. Last year, he grabbed a few friends and started knocking on doors and helping anyone in need.

The small non-profit has been landscaping yards for seniors, helping people move and taken over dish-duty.

With a notebook in hand, Francis has been collecting every smile he receives from those he helps, with the goal of reaching one million.

As of Thursday afternoon, his notebook count hit 798 smiles, and he shows no signs of giving up. This past week he was given a \$500 donation to open up a second location in Forest Lawn.

"It's a very strong community here in Calgary," he said. "It's so beautiful. I'm constantly thrown by the generosity and the response."

TheSmileShop is open every Saturday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 2640 Rundelawn Road N.E. They accept small household items and clean, lightly used clothes as donations every Wednesday from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

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CALGARY TRANSIT

Celebrating another year of thanking operators



Helen Pike
Metro | Calgary

It takes more than just 2,300 Calgary Transit bus drivers, CTrain operators and Calgary Transit Access drivers to make the daily routes run smoothly.

But as the public figures of the city's transportation provider, they're the recurring point

between customer and service.

On Friday, Calgary Transit is asking citizens to participate in Thank Your Driver Day, a worldwide tradition that was started in 1662 when bus service debuted in Paris with horse-drawn carriages.

"It's important to recognize our transit operators for all their hard work on this special day. A simple 'thank you' to bus drivers and a friendly wave to CTrain drivers is a nice touch. Their job is not an easy one," said transit spokesman Ron Collins.

"They make life better every day for Calgarians, especially during these tough times. They get citizens to work, to school, to appointments and special events



They make life better every day for Calgarians, especially during these tough times.

Transit spokesman Ron Collins

safely 365 days a year while manoeuvring large vehicles through traffic and harsh weather conditions."

Of course, as Metro learned from several drivers, their job doesn't start and end at a bus stop. Over the year you might read a newspaper story about how a driver went above and beyond the call of duty to help their customer.

But to these drivers that's

not news, that's just their job.

So, on Thank Your Driver Day, if you find yourself on a CTrain, and the announcer comes on and takes you through the weather forecast, or your regular route driver actually waits for you at a stop (while you're frantically trying to catch that bus to work) — take a minute, say it, and tell them why you appreciate the work they do.

Say thank you.



Helping a lost boy home

When others passed by a crying child, they didn't take any note the upset kid might be in trouble. But **Satnam Singh** took note.

As he was about to turn a corner on his route, he saw the boy alone crying. Concerned, he got out of the bus and crossed the road.

"He was expecting his mother, right away I contacted my call centre," Singh said. "When he saw me he was a little more comfortable because he was alone and cold — I offered him my jacket."

The boy was especially upset because none of the passersby offered him a hand. It was cold outside and he was lost and alone, but not for long.

Singh waited with him until Calgary police showed up.

Singh said customer service is his top priority as a driver, and often a smile is all riders need to brighten their day.



Fixing your slip-ups

It's the small things that count the most, and the magic **Mike Trigiani** can do with a bucket of salt, or waiting those extra seconds for a straggler, is priceless for customers.

On a day like Thursday, Trigiani said he makes a habit of making sure his passengers can get a grip before hopping on his bus.

"Most of them have fallen three or more times just getting to the bus," Trigiani said. "If you see something that needs to be done, you do it."

Trigiani usually gets to work with the supply of salt handy on most of the buses and salts a path for his customers, especially if he can see their trip to his door might get slippery.

But the small things add up, and making customers' days can be the best reward.

Trigiani said recently he was able to be the best part of a rider's morning, when he waited for him to catch the bus.



PHOTOS COURTESY CALGARY TRANSIT

Lifting you up

When customers need a step up, transit operators are often there to lend a helping hand.

And that turned into more than a hand, when **Hector Villamil** saw a woman struggling to get on his bus.

"I just held her, I grabbed her under her arms and helped her hop on the bus," Villamil said. "I thought she was going for a long long ride, but it was a really short ride."

Eight minutes later she was ready to hop off, but he could tell she needed more help.

So, after offering her another hand to cross the street on a snowy day he helped her manoeuvre snow banks with her cane.

"I did my best, I wish I could have done better," Villamil said. He wanted to help her all the way home.

He told Metro he was just doing his job, and it's not the first time he's done something like that to help a passenger out.

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Alberta Theatre lineup to 'defy expectations'

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Season's six plays channel zeitgeist of unity, resistance



Aaron Chatha
Metro | Calgary

Amid a funding crisis, Alberta Theatre Projects has unveiled its 2017-18 season, appropriately themed "defy expectations."

"We're talking about the feeling out there in the zeitgeist of resistance, unity and people standing up for what they believe in, and that's what this season really reflects," said communications director Ashley Meller.

The theme also points to ATP's call for donations from the community — the company needs to raise \$200,000 after a drastic dip in corporate funding cut deep into their budget.

After two weeks, ATP has al-



Constellations is a love story between a beekeeper and a physicist that plays out between parallel dimensions. COURTESY MICAELA DAWN

ready raised 35 per cent of the money, and Meller said the 17-18 season was budgeted before the dip, and won't be affected by the lack of funds, although future seasons could be.

Of the six plays chosen for the next season, one of the strongest

is also the first one up. The Last Wife opens in September, and is written by Broadway performer Kate Hennig. The first play in a planned trilogy, it tells the story Catherine Parr and her marriage to King Henry VIII.

"But it's actually set in modern

times," said Meller. "It's taking the politics of the Tudor era and placing them in current times, so it creates this sexy, modern political thriller, in the vein of House of Cards."

Meller also recommended theatre-goers look out for Con-

"It creates this sexy, modern political thriller."

Ashley Meller

stellations, which comes to the stage near the end of the season.

It's a reality-bending romance that's been applauded in London's west end, and even starred Jake Gyllenhaal during its Broadway run.

For family-friendly performances, look no further than the always-riveting Charlotte's Web, which is appropriate for ages five and up.

Finally, the season also features To The Light (a meditation on loss and the power of friendships), Empire of the Son (a visually striking one-man show exploring a rocky father-son relationship), and jazz hockey drama Glory, which ends the season.

Visit www.atplive.com for more information.

NATIONAL PARKS

Waging war on invasive mussels

Parks Canada is banning motorized watercrafts in Waterton Lakes National Park to try to prevent the spread of invasive mussels.

Canoes, kayaks and other hand-launched watercrafts will still be allowed, although owners will have to inspect them for the aquatic species.

The agency says the move is necessary to protect the ecology of the park on the Alberta-Montana border.

It says mussel larvae were found last fall in the Tiber Reservoir in Montana. The reservoir is less than a half-day's drive from Waterton Lakes.

A commercial boat tour will continue to operate on Upper and Middle Waterton Lake.

Parks Canada says it is working with the U.S. National Park Service and Alberta Environment and Parks to monitor for invasive mussels.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



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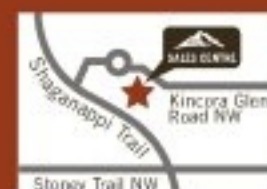
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Jay Baruchel wrote the first Goon film, and is making his directorial debut with the sequel.

AARON CHATHA/METRO

Filming the best hockey fight scene

SCENE YYC

Jay Baruchel talks hockey fisticuffs in Goon sequel



Aaron Chatha
Metro | Calgary

Released back in 2011, the first Goon movie was chock full of bloody, high-impact hockey fights — but the sequel substantially ups the ante.

Jay Baruchel (Million Dollar Baby, How to Train Your Dragon) wrote the first film, and now steps into the director's chair for Goon: Last of the Enforcers. During his press tour through Calgary, Baruchel ran Metro through shooting the perfect on-ice fight scene.

Depending on the story beat, some fights are funny and some fights are unpleasant — but the climax of the film features a brutal one, with Sean William Scott's Doug Glatt going toe-to-toe with Wyatt Russell Anders Cain character.

For every scene of the film, Baruchel sat down and wrote down every shot he needed to capture on camera.

"I got to work that day, went to my pocket to grab my shot list — and I was like, 'I didn't make one. I didn't shot list the

climax,'" he recalled.

Rather than panic, Baruchel put his faith in his crew. He was already familiar with the fight choreography, so he took it apart, punch by punch, and broke the fight into three acts, or hard-hitting moments. He worked backwards from there.

Act one: Fighting clean

"So we shoot the first third of the fight dry. No spit blood, no make-up, just the punches. Once we shot that to death and felt like we had the clean version of it, to the best of our abilities, throw the blood in," he said. "Now we can't go back, it's on their faces, on their jerseys. That's done."



If you put together the right people, they know what the thing is supposed to be. You just let them fire. Jay Baruchel

Act two: Breaking faces

This was where Baruchel throws in the shiner on the eye, the broken nose. This act ends by filling both fighters mouths with blood, and having them spit it out.

Act three: Heavy damage

The final acts put a whole new layer of makeup on the actors, including a pallet in Russell's mouth, when the character's teeth get knocked out.

Baruchel kept his set moving at a fast pace, meaning there

wasn't much room for screw-ups. He explained that the average American movie has about a dozen camera set-ups a day. Canadian films tend to have about 20 to 30, where TV shows average 30 to 45. Baruchel was averaging 45, with one day of shooting reaching 84 camera set-ups in a single day.

That meant a maximum of one or two takes per shot before they moved on to the next one.

"Something I learned from working with Clint Eastwood, if you hire the right people, the rest does its thing," he said. "If you put together the right people, they know what the ... thing is supposed to be. You just

let them fire."

He also eschewed the Hollywood way of shooting fight scenes, where the camera is set up and the fighting is done in front of it.

Instead, he took cues from Hong Kong directors, having the camera follow and find sexy moments in the action.

"You're not fighting for the camera, the camera is helping the fight."

The blood, spit and sweat of Goon: Last of the Enforcers skates to theatres March 17.

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WEEKEND EVENTS

FRIDAY

**Farmers' Market
St. Patrick's Day**

The Calgary Farmers' Market gets into the spirit with a special themed market.

Performers including the Coshquin School of Irish Dance, and there will be a craft table for kids. Don't miss the chance to pucker up and kiss the Blarney Stone for good luck in the photo booth. For more information, visit calgaryfarmersmarket.ca

SATURDAY

**St. Patrick's Punk Rock
Bowling**

Major Minor Music hosts their annual Punk Rock Bowling party extend Irish activities through the weekend.

It's an all-ages concert meets black light bowling, combining art and recreation. Bands include The River Jacks, The Shillelaghs and the Foul English. The event takes place at 8 p.m. at Paradise Lanes

SATURDAY

Angela Morgan

Fernie artist Angela Morgan comes to Gibson Fine Art for a painting demonstration.

The prolific artist has been featured in galleries throughout Canada, the United States and Switzerland.

Anyone is free to attend and watch Morgan create one of her pieces. For more information, visit gibsonfineart.ca

SUNDAY

Glenbow Community Day

The fourth annual community day opens up the Glenbow Museum – for free.

Current exhibits include a celebration of Canada's 150th birthday, Canadian Stories: The View From Here, along with a series called North of Ordinary, which documents the changing life in the arctic. For more information, visit glenbow.org.

AARON CHATHA / METRO

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Wonderheads Kate Braidwood and Andrew Phoenix (centre, right) have created Loon, a puppet love story of a man that falls in love with the moon. COURTESY ANDY WICKSTROM

The love of
a lunatic

FESTIVAL

Loon is a tale of
puppetry and
romance with a
surreal edge

**Aaron
Chatha**
Metro | Calgary

Calgary's Festival of Animated Objects strings through town from March 16 to 19, with a variety of puppet shows including Loon. It's the story of Francis, who is unlucky in love on Earth, then realizes he's in love with the moon. So he goes up and steals it.

The show was created by Wonderheads Kate Braidwood and Andrew Phoenix, and runs on the 17 and 18 at Arts Common. For more information, visit www.puppetfestival.ca.

Q: Tell me about the style of
the performance?

Braidwood: It's performed in a style we call full-face mask. It's these large, oversized masks we wear over our faces. There's no words. It's a bit of a cartoonish style — we call ourselves live action Pixar, or living cartoons.

Q: What inspired the story?

Phoenix: We actually went to the Animated Objects Festival in 2011 with a show called Grim and Fischer. Kate and I actually came together as friends to create that show, but in the process, we fell in love and became a couple. Our second show is Loon.

Grim and Fischer is about death, and having dealt with death, we thought, because we had just fallen in love, we thought let's give love a try (as the next theme).

Q: What makes this word-less
form worth the challenge?

Braidwood: It's such a magical form. The comments we get the most from our audiences members, after they watch the show, is, they're so surprised and entranced by how much the mask seems to come to life during the show. Technically, it's a fixed object. It shouldn't move, it should do anything.

Phoenix: But we animated the object.
Braidwood: Haha, yeah. It conveys different emotions through the show. It shifts expressions depending on the physicality of the actor and the action going on. So, it really does have an emotional arc people get invested in, and I think people are surprised by that.

Q: How much does your own
love story add to the per-
formance?

Braidwood: It's actually a solo show. I'm the performer and I play Francis, the main character. The other character is the moon, which is a puppet of sorts. But Andrew doesn't actually perform in the show, but he's a partner, because he runs all the tech and the sound. And sound is a very integral part of the show. It's a partnership in that way, which is really awesome. He's out there, and he's got my back.

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Karim Baratov was arrested as a suspect in a massive hack of Yahoo emails. INSTAGRAM

Charges 'politically motivated': Lawyer

HACKING

Karim Baratov is maintaining his innocence

A lawyer for a Canadian man of Kazakh origins arrested as one of four suspects in a massive hack of Yahoo emails said Thursday that the charges against his client may be "politically motivated by the U.S."

Jag Virk suggested that his client, 22-year-old Karim Baratov, is being used as a scapegoat by American authorities.

"I believe (U.S. President) Donald Trump is using this to make it appear as if he is going after Russian hackers," he said. "These allegations are from three years ago."

Baratov maintains his innocence and has no prior criminal record, his lawyer said, adding that people should wait for all facts to emerge in the case.

Toronto police said Baratov

was arrested Tuesday in the Ontario community of Ancaster at the request of American authorities.

The U.S. Department of Justice said a grand jury in California has indicted Baratov and three others, two of them allegedly officers of the Russian Federal Security Service, for computer hacking, economic espionage and other criminal offences.

Donald Trump is using this to make it appear as if he is going after Russian hackers.

Jag Virk

U.S. officials said Baratov also went by the names Kay, Karim Taloverov and Karim Akehmek Tokbergenov.

He was arrested under the extradition act, and appeared in court in Hamilton on Wednesday morning, court staff said. His case was put over until Friday afternoon, when he was expected to appear by video.

An acquaintance described Baratov as an exotic car buff who was popular and flashy but tight-lipped about his personal life — including his job, which involved working with computers.

Also indicted in the alleged conspiracy that authorities said began in January 2014 were Dmitry Aleksandrovich Dokuchaev, 33, Igor Anatolyevich Sushchin, 43, and Alex-

sey Alexseyevich (Magg) Belan, 29, all Russian nationals and residents.

Dokuchaev and Sushchin allegedly tasked Baratov with hacking more than 80 accounts in exchange for commissions, according to U.S. authorities, who submitted a provisional arrest warrant to Canadian authorities March 7.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

POLITICS

O'Leary claims the Tory leadership race is 'rigged'

Federal Conservative leadership hopeful Kevin O'Leary's campaign is making allegations of what it calls "fraud" and "widespread vote rigging" in the race.

The celebrity businessman's campaign issued a statement Thursday accusing "campaign activists" of using untraceable prepaid credit cards to sign up fake members. The statement says that would violate federal election and campaign financing laws, adding O'Leary's



Kevin O'Leary

campaign has complained to the party.

His campaign speculates some of those who have been signed up might not even know they're members.

A Conservative party spokesman says the party is looking into O'Leary's accusations.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

HYGIENE

Michael Chong a poster boy for Guatemala

No one is quite sure just how it happened, but Conservative MP Michael Chong has somehow become the poster boy — literally — for a top-quality, "hygienic" experience in Guatemalan washrooms.

Chong's bright smile was spotted on a poster Thursday just outside a washroom in the Central American country, with his arms folded, hair neatly combed and wearing a business suit.

The poster advertises "a special service for special people like you" in Spanish text. That special service is spelled out below:

"sanitary" and "hygienic" bathroom facilities.

The poster was spotted by a visiting Canadian, Bailey Greenspon, who tweeted a photo of it. "Michael Chong, your stock photo is reassuring public washroom users in Guatemala," Greenspon tweeted.

Chong responded with tongue firmly in cheek. "Just part of the Chong campaign's international outreach in Latin America," the leadership hopeful tweeted in reply, adding the hashtag, "#chongtourage" to the end of his post.

Chisholm Pothier, communications director for Chong's leadership campaign, said he doesn't know for sure how Chong ended up being the face of toilet breaks in Guatemala, but it could be because the photos on Chong's website were at one point open for use.

Chong has been a model for nature's call in Guatemala since at least 2015, when another Canadian, Tim McIntosh, said he saw the politician's face on a poster there.

"He actually looks really good," Pothier said. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



Bailey Greenspon and a poster of Michael Chong. CONTRIBUTED

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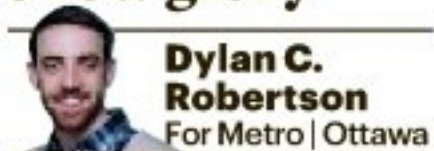


Grant McSheffrey is on a roll on Jeopardy. TWITTER

Jeopardy! streak for Canadian

TELEVISION

Ottawa man tastes game show glory



Dylan C. Robertson
For Metro | Ottawa

Grant McSheffrey forgot his work ID Thursday morning, so he went to the security desk at BlackBerry's QNX branch in Kanata, Ont..

"I went up to the desk to get the badge, and the guard said, 'You were the guy who was on Jeopardy!, right?'"

McSheffrey has indeed become a celebrity of sorts after stringing together three wins on the long-running quiz show this week. Tuesday's episode saw him take home \$30,000 US in a cliffhanger win — a sum he increased to \$69,201 by the end of Thursday's show.

And that might not be all: Jeopardy! champions keep going until they lose.

A voracious reader who enjoys trivia games with friends, McSheffrey had dreamed about being on the show. He applied three times through the show's online test, which poses 50 questions with 15-second time limits.

He was selected for a December 2016 taping and paid his own way to Los Angeles. The show produces five episodes, a whole week's worth, in a single day. A contestant who goes on a win-

ning streak plays in all five and would contend with early-morning paperwork and preparation before playing three consecutive games before lunch — with very brief change-room breaks in-between — and then two more in the afternoon.

McSheffrey said that first taping was a high-pressure day ("I couldn't find a nice black belt I brought, so I had this one that was falling apart") and that he remembers being glad not to be facing the audience.

"All I could think was 'I don't know if my legs are going to stop shaking. Can people see that I'm shaking?' I was just so nervous," he said. "Alex Trebek first comes out and wow — just wow."



No. 1 is just try — you never know. Just go for it.

Grant McSheffrey

"It's easy to keep secrets, because I forgot about what happened," he laughs. "Seeing the reactions of all your friends and family as the show is going on, it's amazing."

McSheffrey's high-energy on-camera presence and retro look prompted Twitter users to post memes, which a friend showed him. "I thought it was just hilarious," he said.

"I couldn't believe having complete strangers that were that interested in it."

McSheffrey can't say how much he's taken home from the show, but he does admit to dreaming of an Austrian ski trip with his family.

He says anyone who dreams of applying should be persistent. "No. 1 is just try — you never know," he says. "Just go for it."

AMANDA TODD

Dutch man gets 11 years for cyberbullying

The mother of B.C. teen Amanda Todd praised a Dutch court for sentencing a man, wanted in Canada for alleged online abuse, to nearly 11 years in prison for cyberbullying dozens of young girls and gay men.

"I felt a sense of relief that he was found guilty and that he got the maximum sentence that was possible," Carol Todd said in a telephone interview from Port Coquitlam, B.C.

The court in The Hague, Netherlands convicted Aydin Coban,

38, on Thursday for fraud and blackmail via the Internet, according to a statement from the Dutch legal authorities.

It gave the Dutch citizen the maximum possible sentence of 10 years and eight months, "because of the devastating consequences his behaviour has on the young lives of the girls" in particular, and out of fear that he could commit new offences if released, the statement said.

Coban faces a separate trial in Canada for the cyberbullying of

Amanda Todd, 15, whose suicide drew global attention.

Carol Todd said it was "emotional but satisfying" to attend Coban's trial for three days earlier this month, and see him face-to-face.

Amanda Todd brought cyberbullying to mainstream attention in 2012 by posting a video in which she told her story with handwritten signs, describing how she was lured by a stranger to expose her breasts on a webcam. A photo ended up on

a Facebook page made by the stranger, and her friends were added to it. She was repeatedly bullied, despite changing schools, before finally taking her own life weeks after posting the video.

"People ask me if I am angry," Carol Todd said. "I feel more sad that someone has to go to this extent to bring pleasure into their life — to victimize and torment."

"I certainly hope that he gets some rehabilitation ... and thinks deeply about what he has done," she said. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



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A new kind of diplomacy

POLITICS

Justin Trudeau trying to get an in with Trump through Ivanka

A businesswoman whose life-style brand is struggling with liberals. A liberal-multilateralist prime minister who needs an in with a conservative-nationalist president.

Diplomacy is rooted in interests. And Ivanka Trump and Justin Trudeau both have an interest in hanging out with each other.

The prime minister sat with the president's daughter Wednesday night at the Broadway musical *Come From Away*, the Canadian show about the Newfoundland town that took in stranded Americans on Sept. 11, 2001. It was his second olive branch to her in just over a month.

Some U.S. news outlets suggested Trudeau had been sending a kind of passive-aggressive message: "Justin Trudeau brought Ivanka Trump to a Broadway show that celebrates generosity towards foreigners in need," the New York Times tweeted.



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's budding friendship with Ivanka Trump appears to be a way to get an in with her father, the president of the U.S. INSTAGRAM/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Whether or not that was true, he was also offering a kind of cashless donation to her company.

Trudeau joked of his "bromance" with former president Barack Obama. Shared youth and mutual interest in women's issues notwithstanding, his new bestiehood appears much more a marriage of convenience.

"It is just so *Game of Thrones*," said John Higginbotham, a former Canadian diplomat in Wash-

ington, referring to the television show in which warring family dynasties strike strategic alliances in ruthless pursuit of power.

Like Donald Trump before her, Ivanka Trump has made a brand out of her name. Her name has been tarnished, in the eyes of millions of progressive American consumers, by her father's xenophobia and sexism. Who better to be seen with than the fashionable foreign progressive

feminist who hugs refugees?

For Trudeau, daughter diplomacy offers the prospect of a lifeline to a president who shares almost none of his principles but who often appears to value personal relationships over ideology and policy — and who appreciates a political gift. Donald Trump has lavished praise upon chief executives who have let him take undeserved credit for their investments.

"It looks as if foreign leaders think the way to approach Trump is by direct or indirect appeals to his ego and personality, rather than in terms of national interests," said Charles Stevenson, a former State Department policy planner who teaches foreign policy at Johns Hopkins University.

Donald Trump, not Ivanka Trump, was Trudeau's original invite to the play, communications director Kate Purchase said. Trump told Trudeau he couldn't make it, Purchase said, "but suggested that perhaps Ivanka Trump could join instead."

"We are committed to continuing to build on that relationship in a positive, constructive way. That means talking to U.S. senators, members of Congress, governors, Cabinet secretaries, business leaders, and importantly: the president and those close to him."

Trudeau's early work with Ivanka Trump has paid at least superficial dividends. Trump boasted in his high-profile address to Congress of the new Canada-U.S. council on women in business; Trudeau was the only foreign leader he mentioned by name. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

COURT

Another judge blocks Muslim ban

Rejecting arguments from the government that President Donald Trump's revised travel ban was substantially different from the first one, judges in Hawaii and Maryland blocked the executive order from taking effect as scheduled on Thursday, using the president's own words as evidence that the order discriminates against Muslims.

The rulings in Hawaii late Wednesday and in Maryland early Thursday were victories for civil liberties groups and advocates for immigrants and refugees, who argued that a temporary ban on travel from six predominantly Muslim countries violated the First Amendment. The Trump administration argued that the ban was intended to protect the U.S. from terrorism.

In Greenbelt, Maryland, U.S. District Judge Theodore Chuang called Trump's own statements about barring Muslims from entering the U.S. "highly relevant."

"Despite these changes, the history of public statements continues to provide a convincing case that the purpose of the Second Executive Order remains the realization of the long-envisioned Muslim ban," Chuang said. The second executive order removed a preference for religious minorities from the affected countries, among other changes that the Justice Department argued would address the legal concerns surrounding the first ban.

In Honolulu, U.S. District Judge Derrick Watson criticized what he called the "illogic" of the government's arguments and cited "significant and un rebutted evidence of religious animus" behind the travel ban. He also noted that while courts should not examine the "secret motives" of decision-makers, "the remarkable facts at issue here require no such impermissible inquiry."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SPENDING

Defence, security win in Trump budget, many others lose

Military spending would get the biggest boost in President Donald Trump's proposed budget. Environmental programs, medical research, Amtrak and an array of international and cultural programs would take big hits.

The budget proposal out Thursday is a White House wish list; it'll be up to Congress to decide where money goes. If Trump gets his way, there will be more losers than winners among government departments and programs. Here is a sampling:

WINNERS

■ The Pentagon. Trump pro-

poses a 10 per cent increase in the massive defence budget, with an extra \$52 billion going to accelerate the war against the Islamic State group and address insufficient weapons stocks, personnel gaps, deferred maintenance and cyber vulnerabilities. An additional \$2 billion would go to nuclear weapons.

■ Veterans Affairs. Up 5.9 per cent. That's an additional \$4.4 billion, driven by ever-growing health care costs. The plan would allocate \$3.5 billion to extend an expiring Veterans Choice program.

■ Homeland Security. Up 6.8 per cent. That's \$2.8 billion more. Most of the increase, \$2.6 billion, would be to help kick-start Trump's promised border wall. The president has repeatedly said Mexico would pay for the wall; Mexican officials are adamant that they won't. Trump also wants an extra \$1.5 billion for more immigration jails and deportations, and \$314 million to hire 1,500 immigration enforcement and border patrol agents.

■ School choice: \$1.4 billion more to expand school choice

programs, bringing spending in that area to \$20 billion, even as the Education Department's overall budget would be cut by \$9 billion, or 13 per cent.

LOSERS:

■ EPA, facing a 31.4 per cent cut, or \$2.6 billion. The plan would cut 3,200 jobs at the agency, eliminate a new plan for tighter regulations on power plants, and "zero out" programs to clean up the Great Lakes and the Chesapeake Bay. EPA climate change research would be eliminated. Grants for state and local drinking and wastewater

projects would be preserved.

■ Health and Human Services, facing a \$12.6 billion cut, or 16.2 per cent. The plan would cut \$5.8 billion from the nearly \$32 billion National Institutes of Health, the nation's premier medical research agency, bringing its total to \$25.9 billion.

■ State Department and U.S. Agency for International Development. Down 31 per cent, or \$17 billion. Foreign aid would be reduced, as would money to the UN and to multilateral development banks including the World Bank. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



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Residents, activists, and friends and family members of victims of gun violence march down Michigan Avenue carrying nearly 800 wooden crosses bearing the names of people murdered in the city in 2016 on Dec. 31, 2016 in Chicago. GETTY IMAGES

Acclimatizing to violence

Living in New Orleans, what's shocking isn't the sound of gunfire, but how quickly it becomes quotidian

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD
From the U.S.



A young man stood outside a pharmacy on a busy New Orleans street this week, selling CDs of his music for \$5 a disc.

This isn't unusual here; I've seen young men (not so much women) sell music and paintings outside pharmacies and gas stations. My sister, visiting from Vancouver, bought the CD, and listening to it while driving around, we heard him rap about people he's lost.

He seemed young, maybe not even out of his teens, and the people he wished he could "talk for a minute" with were only 20 or 22. It's not explicit what they were lost to, but this is New Orleans, and it's a safe bet guns were involved.

The city got off to a violent start in 2017. In just the first month of the year, 75 people were hurt or killed by gunshots, a 50-per-cent jump over 2016, which was an usually violent year in its own right. Last year, 604 guns were reported stolen — up 19 per cent from 2015 — in a trend that police say fuels street violence and arms gangs.

In a way totally foreign to a Canadian, the normalcy of life here exists atop the knowledge that guns are everywhere. Road rage encounters not infrequently turn to shootings. Sitting in my living room, I've heard shots a handful of times. It only took a few months before that fact stopped surprising me, and I play the same game as my neighbours: gun-shot or fireworks?

The news headlines become

routine. A man was shot in an apartment complex in the city's east end on Sunday. Two men and a woman were killed (and another woman injured by a shot to the head) in the Metairie suburb on Wednesday. Last week, a 30-year-old mother and her six-year-old and 10-year-old sons were all shot dead.

In a recent piece for NPR, a reporter noted how mundane all this violence has become, how people absorb it into their daily lives as fact, endure it like the weather.

But it's not exactly that simple. Gun violence is both mundane and an omnipresent threat. It's a psychological underpinning to otherwise innocuous decisions you might make, such as what street to walk down, or whether to flip the bird to another driver. And that's coming from a white ex-pat woman, in a city where 70 per cent of those killed by guns are black men, according to a recent report in the Gambit newspaper.

With U.S. President Donald Trump's crusade against "inner cities," the long-debunked "law and order" approach is reigning again in Washington, even though we know that violence is learned, that offenders have often been victims and ending the cycle requires dramatic improvements to health, education, employment and safety. But perhaps the most frustrating fact is just how easy it is to drop into a city so emblematic of this country's racial inequality and extraordinary gun violence, and feel the current of acceptance pull you in, even just a little.

ESPIONAGE

Intel finds no indication of surveillance

There is no indication that Trump Tower was "the subject of surveillance" by the U.S. government before or after the 2016 election, the top two members of the Senate intelligence committee said Thursday, directly contradicting President Donald Trump's claims.

"Based on the information available to us, we see no indications that Trump Tower was the subject of surveillance by any element of the United States government either before or after Election Day 2016," Sens. Richard

Burr, R-N.C., and Mark Warner, D-Va., said in a one-sentence joint statement Thursday afternoon.

It was not immediately clear what prompted the senators' statement.

Burr and Warner were among eight senior congressional leaders briefed Friday by FBI Director James Comey.

The senators joined a growing, bipartisan group of lawmakers who have since publicly disputed Trump's accusation, which was made in a series of

tweets more than two weeks ago. The president accused former president Barack Obama of tapping the phones at his New York skyscraper and compared the incident to Watergate.

Trump, in an interview Wednesday with Fox News, said he'd learned about the alleged wiretapping from news reports referencing intercepted communications, despite the fact that he and his advisers have publicly denounced stories about government agencies reviewing contacts

between Trump associates and Russians.

Trump said there would be "some very interesting items coming to the forefront over the next two weeks."

Earlier Thursday, House Speaker Paul Ryan of Wisconsin pushed back on the accusations as well.

"We've cleared that up," Ryan said, adding that he'd received a briefing and seen no evidence of Trump's wiretap claims.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



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Liz Rizzi, left, allows animal rights activist Michael Dolling to remove the fur collar on her Canada Goose jacket outside the New York Stock Exchange on Thursday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Canada Goose to keep using real fur

BUSINESS

Company will stay the course as it debuts on stock exchange

The head of Canada Goose vowed Thursday to keep using animal fur in its parkas rather than bow to activist pressure as shares of the luxury brand



A lot of jackets we make don't have fur on them.

Dani Reiss

soared nearly 27 per cent in its initial public offering in Toronto.

"We're not looking to change our plans (to use fur) in response to a loud but vocal minority," said president and CEO Dani Reiss as the company made its debut on the Toronto and New York stock markets.

Reiss, whose grandfather founded the company 60 years ago, said Canada Goose has long used duck down feathers and coyote fur in its jackets and is comfortable with the practice because it is a "functional first brand."

"Additionally to that, we make a lot of jackets," he said. "A lot of jackets we make don't have fur on them. We know that wearing different products is a

personal choice and we offer products for everybody."

For years, the company has been targeted by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals.

The animal-rights group has protested outside Canada Goose's offices, run campaigns against the outerwear maker and recently said it plans on buying around \$4,000 worth of shares so it can speak out at annual meetings.

Toronto-based Canada Goose started out in a small warehouse under the name Metro Sportswear Ltd. by Reiss's grandfather, Sam Tick.

Canada Goose said it had revenue of \$290.8 million and net income of \$26.5 million in fiscal 2016, according to securities filings. THE CANADIAN PRESS

SOCIAL MEDIA

McDonald's looking into anti-Trump tweet

McDonald's says it has been notified by Twitter that its account was "compromised" after it appeared to send a message calling Donald Trump "a disgusting excuse of a President."

The tweet to Trump from the official account for McDonald's Corp., a message that has since been deleted but was captured in a screenshot, said it would love to have President Obama back. "Also you have

tiny hands," the tweet told Trump.

The tweet was also temporarily pinned to the top of the McDonald's account so that it would be the top message people see if they visited the company's Twitter profile.

A McDonald's representative said the company deleted the tweet, has secured the account and is investigating the matter.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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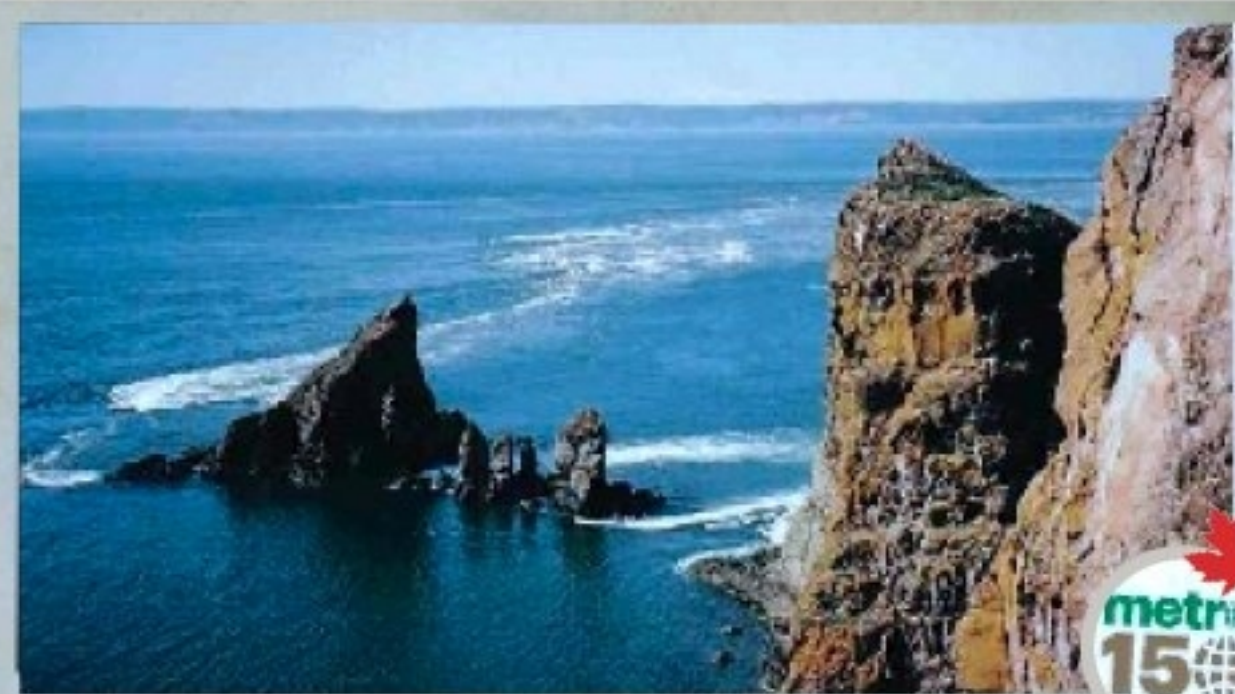
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A Director, under the Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act will make an application for: **Permanent Guardianship Order**; of your child born on **December 11, 2016**. If you wish to speak to this matter in court, you **MUST** appear in court on this date. You do have the right to be represented by a lawyer. If you do not attend in person or by a lawyer, an Order may be made in your absence and the Judge may make a different Order than the one being applied for by the Director. You will be bound by any Order the Judge makes.

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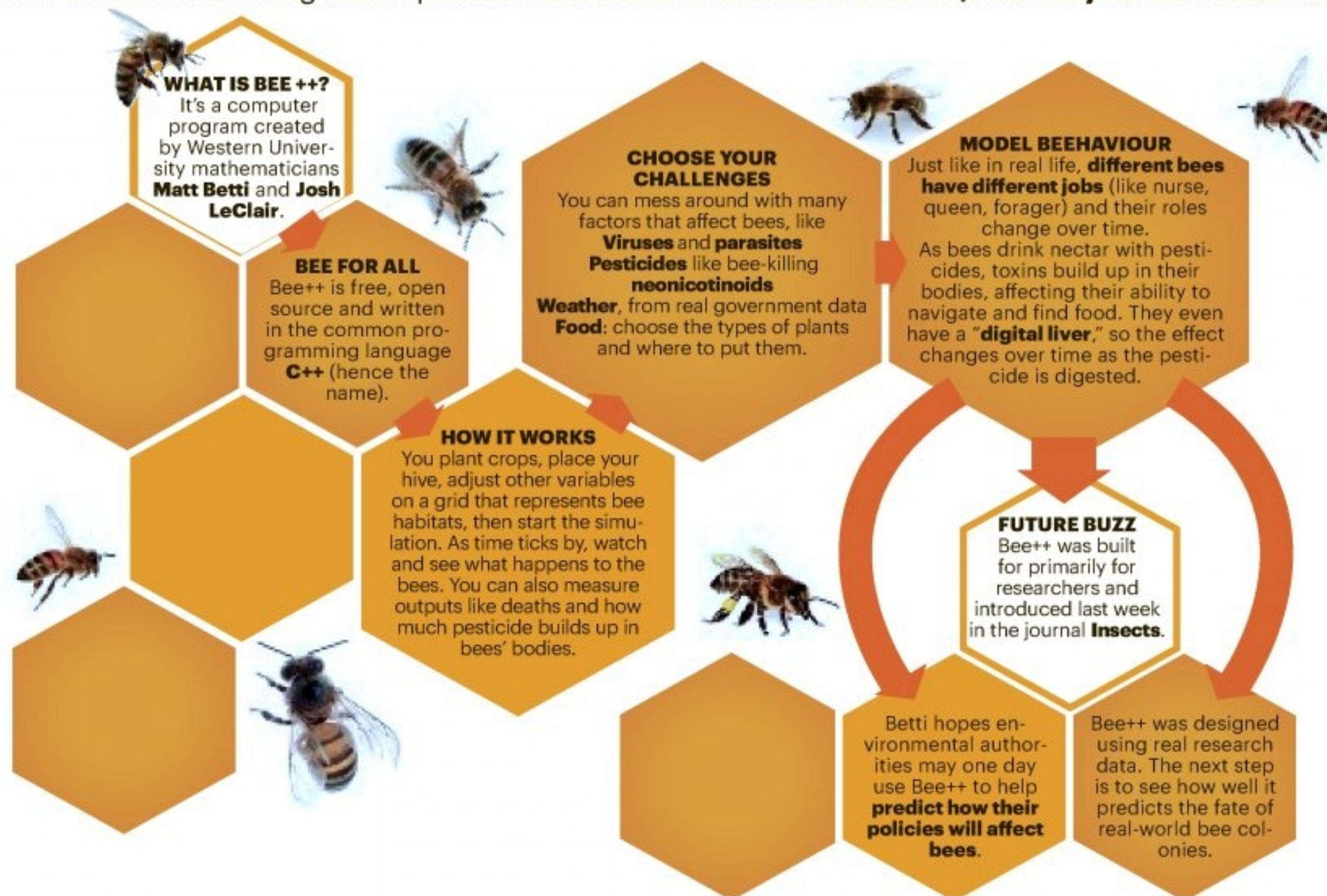


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DECODED by Genna Buck and Andrés Plana

ON A WING AND A GAME PLAYER

Honeybees are in trouble. For years, they've been plagued with Colony Collapse Disorder, a strange syndrome killing masses of bees. Why? It's a complicated combo of pesticides, parasites and other factors. For the future of our food supply and economy, we must protect pollinators. But studying them is time-consuming and expensive. **Thanks to a some clever math, that may be about to change.**



FINDINGS Your week in science



STRETCHING SCREENS

Using simple silicon and gel, UBC scientists made a touchscreen that can sense pressure, motion or a hovering finger, even when it's folded or bent. One day, you might be able to just fold out your phone into a tablet.

POWER UP

Speaking of smartphones, Disney has built a prototype "charging room" with a copper pole and aluminum walls that can charge 10 batteries at once — wirelessly. It's safe for people to enter, the company says, and it sounds like something that could come in handy in the future Magic Kingdom.

SOUND SMART



DEFINITION

In evolution, a **clade** is a group of living things including a common ancestor and all its direct descendants. It's one branch on the tree of life.

USE IT IN A SENTENCE

My great-grandmother, my grandma, my mom and me are one big happy **clade**.



CITIZEN SCIENTIST by Genna Buck

Play on, kids. Slime isn't going to kill you.

The Great Slime Panic of 2017. If you have school-age kids, you know what I'm talking about.

Mania for slime — a bouncy, stretchy concoction of water, craft glue, food colouring and borax — is sweeping social media.

But Health Canada recently recommended against using borax in children's arts and crafts, citing possible "developmental and reproductive health effects."

As a rule, I trust Health Canada's scientific expertise com-

pletely. But something about this dictum didn't sit right with me.

Canadians have been using borax, a powdery white mineral, as a household detergent for more than a century. And small, harmless amounts of boron, its elemental form, naturally occur in fruits, vegetables and drinking water.

Borax can irritate skin and eyes, and you definitely shouldn't eat it, but could playing with goo really harm your child's future reproductive health? And why is the gov-

ernment suddenly concerned about it?

The second question is easier. Health Canada has launched a long-term project evaluating the safety of chemicals used for a long time, but perhaps not scrutinized enough back in the day.

For insight into the first question, I asked medical toxicologist Dr. Andrew Stolbach.

The highlights: Long-term exposure to high doses of boron is linked to testicular abnormalities in dogs and rats. These studies are small and mostly more than

20 years old.

There are a few small studies of people exposed to high levels of boron for years, which showed slightly elevated rates of fertility problems and miscarriage. But the difference was not significant.

Bottom line: he's fine with his five-year-old daughter playing with borax slime now and then.

"To me, it's a very, very small risk. And it's a theoretical risk."

Science Question?

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BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

Director Bill Condon takes cue from 1946 version of film

Richard Crouse

For Metro Canada



Poet Paul Éluard said that to understand Jean Cocteau's 1946 version of *La Belle et la Bête* — Beauty and the Beast — you must love your dog more than your car. His comment is baffling only if you haven't seen the movie.

Once Cocteau's film is seen, it's apparent that what makes his version rewarding is that it values the organic over the mechanical — even the special effects are handmade. It refuses to allow the technical aspects of the film to interfere with the humanity of the story.

This weekend Disney will have their collective fingers crossed that audiences will favour their poodles over their RVs as they release the big-budget, live-action version of *Beauty and the Beast* starring Emma Watson.

Director Bill Condon says the animated 1991 Disney classic was an inspiration for the new film, but adds he also drew from everything from *Twilight* and *Frankenstein* to a 1932 musical comedy called *Love Me Tonight* when creating the look for the new movie.

He also mentions *La Belle et*



Bill Condon took inspiration from a variety of films, including Jean Cocteau's *La Belle et la Bête*. CONTRIBUTED

la Bête. "A film I really love." His take on the Beast looked back to the movie, cribbing the character's combination of ferocity and romance from Cocteau.

Before taking in the new version this weekend, let's have a look back at the little-seen 70-year old Cocteau classic.

Loosely based on the timeless Jeanne-Marie Leprince de Beaumont fairy tale, the action in *La*

MOVIE RATINGS by Richard Crouse

Beauty and the Beast ★★
T2 Trainspotting ★★
Goon: Last of the Enforcers ★★
The Sense of an Ending ★★
Weirdos ★★

★★★
 ★★
 ★★
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 ★★

HOW RATING WORKS
 ★★★★★ SEE IT
 ★★★ WORTHWHILE
 ★★ UP TO YOU
 ★ SKIP IT

Belle et la Bête begins when a poverty-stricken merchant pilfers a rose from a grand estate

owned by a strange creature. The Beast strikes a deal with the man.

He'll spare the life of the merchant in return for the hand of one of the man's daughters. Reluctantly the merchant offers Belle, a beautiful girl who had been courted by the oafish Avenant.

At first she is repulsed by the Beast, who looks like the love child of the Wolf Man and Mrs. Chewbacca, but over time his tender ways and nightly offers of marriage warm her heart

and she learns to love him for his inner beauty.

Cocteau's version strays from the original story and Condon's adaptation with the addition of a subplot involving Avenant's scheme to kill the Beast and make off with his treasures and an unexpected magical personality switcheroo.

It's meant to be a happy ending, but not everyone loved the new coda. When Marlene Dietrich saw an early cut of the film at a private screening, she squeezed Cocteau's hand and said, "Where is my beautiful Beast?"

Other audiences embraced Cocteau's vision. In his diary the poet wrote of a test screening held for the technicians in the Joinville Studio where the film had been made. "The welcome the picture received from that audience of workers was unforgettable," he wrote.

Others criticized *La Belle et la Bête* for its straightforwardness, complaining that the characters are simply drawn, the story one dimensional. Taking that view, however, misses Cocteau's point.

At the beginning of the film he asks for "childlike simplicity," inviting the viewer to connect with their inner child, eschew cynicism and embrace naiveté for the film's 96-minute running time.

In 1946 the request was meant as a salve for a post-occupation France that was still dealing with the aftermath of a terrible war.

Today, in an increasingly contemptuous world, the message still seems timely and welcome.

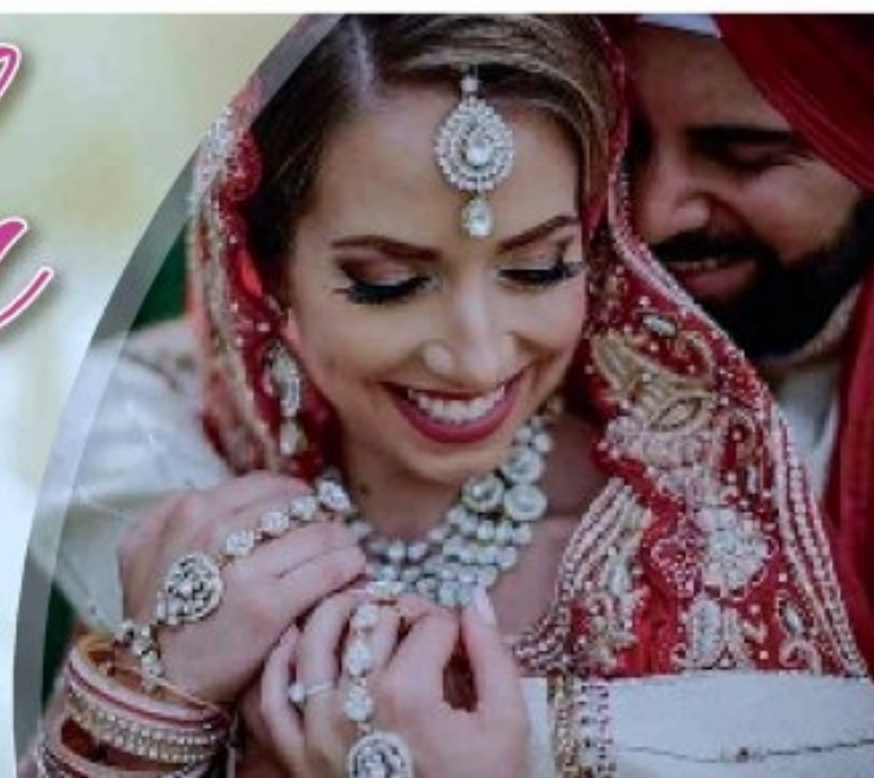
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Weekend, March 17-19, 2017 29

Mouse House undergoes some real-life renovation



Audra McDonald, who stars as Madame Garderobe in *Beauty and the Beast*, insists live-action remakes shouldn't upset the animation traditionalists. CONTRIBUTED

INTERVIEW

Beauty and the Beast sparks Disney's new era of remakes

Steve Gow
For Metro Canada



Disney is banking on the *Beauty and the Beast*.

After all, not only is it presumably the most expensive musical ever made, but it will also ring in a new era for the Mouse House — one in which the studio will focus on morphing live-action remakes from its own animated classics.

Of course, they began last year with *The Jungle Book* and *Cinderella* but this weekend's *Beauty and the Beast* officially initiates a new age of live-action adaptations that just may be leaving diehard Disney animation fans moping.

"Traditionalists might think that it means the thing they love so much is being erased but it's not and it's not being shunned in anyway," explained actress Audra McDonald, who portrays Madame Garderobe in this week-

end's remake of the 1991 animated blockbuster. "That film is absolutely perfect and no one denies that; Disney isn't trying to get rid of that — they're just exploring."

In fact, McDonald goes one step further, insisting that Disney's investment in reimagining old classics will only benefit fervent film-lovers. While immortal gems certainly have charm, there is a delightful difference in seeing iconic cartoons transformed. "It just allows for subtler shading that can only be achieved with actual human beings," said the six-time Tony Award-winning thespian.

In fact, whether it's the endearing tale of a beauty that falls in love with a hideous beast or any other animated gem-turned-live action hit, the form of any fairy tale will only be as good as its story.

"This story touches the core in our humanity of wanting to be seen for who we are," said McDonald of what really makes the updated classic work. "No matter what generation we are in, what period of time we're living in, that's always going to be a deeply human thing and that's why I think it continues to resonate."

BONUS: 3 MORE REMAKES EN ROUTE

The Little Mermaid

Early in development, Hamilton-creator Lin-Manuel Miranda is currently shaping songs for the updated musical about a mermaid out of water.



Cruella

Fresh off her Oscar win for *La La Land*, Emma Stone will



next take on playing the villain from *101 Dalmations* in this origin story.

Aladdin

This 1992 genie gem gets a reboot courtesy of Sherlock Holmes-helmer Guy Ritchie. The Oscar-winning musical begins its transformation when filming begins this summer.



Three favourites getting the live-action treatment

Disney has more than a dozen live-action reboots in the works. Here are three of the most-anticipated: STEVE GOW



The Lion King (tbd)

This cherished lion-cub drama will be getting a real-life renovation at the hands of *Jungle Book*-director Jon Favreau, who has cast Donald Glover (TV's *Atlanta*) to play Simba while James Earl Jones will return to portray Mufasa, the same character he voiced in the 1994 hit.



Dumbo (May 2018)

It's been over 75 years since a big-eared elephant broke hearts on the big screen in this Disney classic. Now renowned filmmaker Tim Burton will rejuvenate the peppy pachyderm. However with a script being written by Ehren Kruger (*The Ring*), this *Dumbo* could be a little less straight-forward.



Mulan (November 2018)

Although little is known, this 1998 Disney favourite is definitely in the works with director Niki Caro (the upcoming *The Zookeeper's Wife*) in charge. A tale about one of China's greatest heroines, the studio has put out a casting call for an Asian lead after false rumours that Jennifer Lawrence was cast created an uproar with fans.

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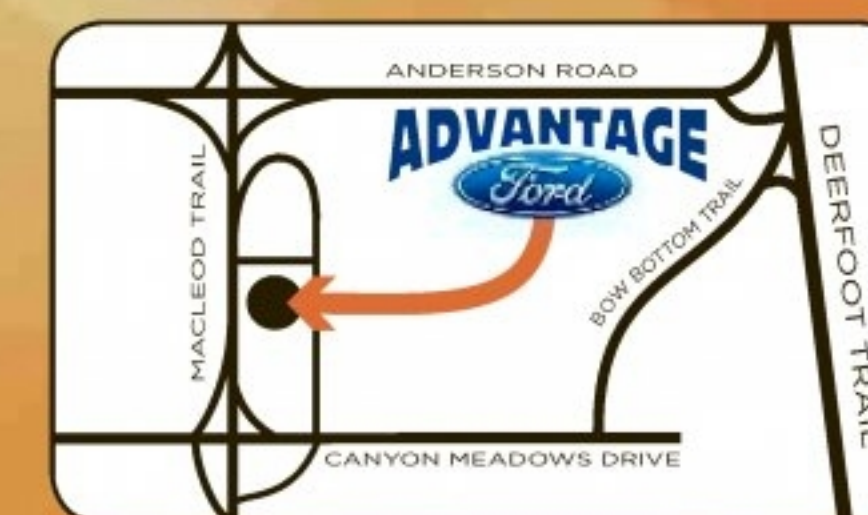
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Movies **metro**LIFE

No kicking the habit of a lifetime

ANALYSIS

Redemption not the drug of choice for our favourite Scots

Peter
Howell
life@metronews.ca

There's something reassuring about how little Sick Boy, Begbie, Spud and Renton have learned about life in the past two decades.

A generation after these characters from Danny Boyle's *Trainspotting* shocked and amused with their heroin-junkie antics, Boyle's long-awaited sequel *T2 Trainspotting* returns to Edinburgh to find they're still the same screw-ups as before. No boring Hollywood redemption for these lads.

Flash man Sick Boy (Jonny Lee Miller) is running a sex black-mailing operation with his new girlfriend/combatant Veronika (Anjela Nedyalkova).

Head case Begbie (Robert Carlyle) is planning to bust out of prison, where he's been for the past 20 years, atoning for all



Trainspotting sequel *T2* returns to Edinburgh to find they protagonists are still the same screw-ups as before. CONTRIBUTED

kinds of violent crimes.

Sad sack Spud (Ewen Bremner) is still on the junk, a habit that, along with suicidal depression, could leave him like the group's lost pal Tommy (RIP).

Renton (Ewan McGregor), ever the cunning catalyst, has been hiding out in Amsterdam since he stole the big bag of cash from his supposed pals in the London drug deal that ending *Trainspot-*

ting. He's acquired a wife and a job in "stock management software for the retail sector," but it's not the life he would have chosen for himself.

Events transpire to bring these four back together, although Boyle and returning screenwriter John Hodge, once again adapting the prose of Irvine Welsh (*Trainspotting*, *Porno*), tease out the inevitable reckoning.

And with good reason. The four Scottish knuckleheads, now unhappily middle-aged — "I'm 46 and f—ed!" Renton wails — have a lot of figuring out to do.

There's the matter of the missing money, and the betrayal behind it. There are women from both the past (Kelly Macdonald's Diane) and present (Veronika's a real firecracker) to contend with. Something that passes for

introspection crosses the mind of at least three of the characters — Spud turns out to have literary aspirations — but Begbie is as crazy as ever.

A number of callbacks are both desired and essential, and Boyle keeps them to a brisk minimum: Iggy Pop's *Lust For Life* is still on the soundtrack; Scottish pub toilets are every bit as disgusting as before; Choose Life

is still a cynically ironic slogan.

The drug use has been dialed down, more for narrative reasons than censorship fears, although Anthony Dod Mantle, Boyle's go-to cinematographer, maintains the woozy connection with interesting camera angles. A recurring motif of wrecked cars and industrial waste being piled up outside Sick Boy's flat recalls the first film's sensation that society is bent on destroying itself.

It's inevitable, I suppose, that a sequel to *Trainspotting* could never be as audacious as the first movie, part of the indie film revolution of the 1990s.

But it's great to see these guys again, and you can bet we haven't heard the last of them.

Boyle employs a fantastic visual cue that hints at resolution being just a shot away but also never fully realized, the junkie's eternal dilemma.

Renton returns to his bedroom in his family home, the one with trains on the wallpaper, and studies his old record collection.

He looks like he's about to drop the needle on David Bowie's LP *The Man Who Sold the World*. Waiting ... waiting ... we're held in suspense, as always.

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INTERVIEW

Long-awaited Trainspotting sequel zeroes in on age issues

As with any long-delayed family reunion, nobody was expecting the sequel to Trainspotting to be a piece of cake, or even a gob of heroin.

Least of all director Danny Boyle and star Ewan McGregor, whose friendship came apart over the casting for Boyle's 2000 terror-in-paradise film The Beach, in which Leonardo DiCaprio got the lead gig McGregor felt Boyle had promised him.

McGregor and Boyle didn't speak for most of the two decades since Trainspotting, a bleak satire about Edinburgh heroin addicts that became Britain's smack-infused answer to the 1990s indie-film revolution spearheaded by the likes of America's Quentin Tarantino and Steven Soderbergh. But now the sequel T2 Trainspotting is almost upon us.

"Ewan and I fell out over The Beach, and it was my fault, and we reconciled about three or four years ago," Boyle, 60, says from Australia, one stop on a world-wide promotional tour.

"So by the time we were working on this seriously, when this script arrived two years ago, we were on good terms and I knew he'd do it. It was wonderful to work with him again. I've missed him, really."

But getting McGregor, 45, to reprise his Mark Renton character — now older but not wiser, and in even bigger trouble than before — was just one of many hurdles to overcome on the sequel path. Boyle also had to round up other key members of the Trainspotting cast: flash Sick Boy (Jonny Lee Miller), psycho Begbie (Robert Carlyle) and sad Spud (Ewen Bremner). He also found room in the film for a cameo by Renton's ex-girlfriend Diane (Kelly Macdonald), while greatly expanding the female quotient with wily new character Veronika (Anjela Nedyalkova).

Then there was the small matter of the script, which returning screenwriter John Hodge adapted from two novels by Scottish author Irvine Welsh, the original Trainspotting and its follow-up Porno.

The story had to be something the Manchester-born filmmaker really wanted to do, because his career has been noteworthy for its never-look-back variety of stories and genres. In the 23 years since his feature debut with the black comedy Shallow Grave, which also starred McGregor, he's successfully tackled horror (28 Days Later), science fiction (Sunshine), family comedy (Millions), Bollywood-style romance (Oscar winner Slumdog Millionaire) and real-life survival drama (127 Hours), among other pursuits.

There were multiple attempts at a T2 script until Boyle got one



Twenty years on, Boyle's wild boys still choosing life

Sick Boy (Jonny Lee Miller), Mark Renton (Ewan McGregor) and Spud (Ewen Bremner) are struggling with the transition into adulthood in Trainspotting sequel T2. CONTRIBUTED

he was satisfied with.

"We did do quite a few. We had a couple of false starts 10 years ago, which were terrible. They were complete traditional sequels: different plot, same characters. Kind of the same thing again with a different engine, or with different mechanics."

"There was no greater sense of the characters coming together again, other than obviously the trigger to Renton returning. I remember thinking they're not good enough, and we'll never make this. The actors will never agree to do it; I'm not even going to send it to them."

He finally got a script that he

and the actors liked, and shooting commenced. But when he was editing the film in post-production, he noticed something he hadn't before: how much the children in the middle-aged lives of Renton, Spud, Sick Boy and Begbie were affecting the tone of the film. All these guys are now struggling to Choose Life not just for themselves, but also for the children they've fathered, and not in ideal circumstances.

Boyle also realized that T2 had to be much less of a drug-infused movie that Trainspotting was — although there are a lot of hilarious callbacks to the original — and to concentrate more of

the boys-to-men struggle of the protagonists.

"What we decided in the end, in editing, is that it was really about what had happened to these men over time. We thought the film was about time (the 20 years past), and then we realized it was about masculine behaviour over time. It's about what happens to men as they age very badly."

But all of the actors playing them have aged delightfully. T2 may have been a difficult family reunion to pull off, but it's turned out to be a happy one.

"They've changed, though, all of them. Including Ewan, because he's directed a movie now (American Pastoral), and Bobby has also directed a movie (Barney Thomson) ... they now know so much about filmmaking, whereas I remember, the first time, how little they knew about filmmaking, just as I did my first time."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



I knew he'd do it. It was wonderful to work with him again. I've missed him, really.

Danny Boyle, on Ewan McGregor

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Allan Hawco in *Weirdos*, the film about a teenager living in a small town in Nova Scotia in 1976 who decides to run away to live with his mother. CONTRIBUTED

Maritimes' prodigal son stays home

INTERVIEW

Allan Hawco's love for native turf breeding much success

Steve Gow
For Metro Canada



It's the day after the Canadian Screen Awards and Allan Hawco missed out on the whole affair.

Grounded in Newfoundland after a treacherous windstorm left tens of thousands without electricity, the actor resigned to watch his latest film *Weirdos* pick up two CSAs from afar.

But he actually didn't mind that much.

"I don't like leaving the province," laughed the 39-year-old thespian a day later. "I was bummed that I wasn't there with all my friends last night but there was a part of me that didn't mind staying a little bit later in St. John's."

Raised on *The Rock*, Hawco is truly one of the Maritimes' prodigal sons. Not only does he still make Newfoundland his home, but it's where the actor-producer decided to film his former six-season television hit drama *Republic of Doyle* and his new historical Netflix fur-trade series *Frontier*.

"I just kind of grew up with this severe love for Newfound-

land — it's weird," explained Hawco. "I wanted more than anything in my life to produce and create television and film there and work and live there. I've wanted that far more than I might have, in my younger years, to be a Hollywood celebrity."

As such, Hawco is proving an intriguing personality in Canadian entertainment. By shunning the alluring spotlight of Tinseltown to achieve success north of the border, he's arguably inspiring other ambitious actors averse to the seductive pull of American showbiz.

In Hawco's case, it's also landed him a small-but-satisfying paternal part in *Weirdos* (in theatres today) where he

mingled with fellow-minded flag-wavers like iconic director Bruce McDonald (*Highway 61*, *Trigger*) and celebrated scribe Daniel MacIvor.

"He's been a mentor to me over the years," admitted Hawco of the Cape Breton playwright and his Canadian Screen Award-winning script about two teens coming-of-age as they hitchhike across 1970's Nova Scotia.

"But another reason I wanted to do the movie is because of Bruce. There's people like them who have committed their lives to telling our stories and believe in it. There's a beautiful thing when you do that and people care — that's something that's hard to achieve and when it does work, it's very special."

▶ BEHIND THE SCENES

Weirdos wins two

"(Daniel) was unprepared for the thought that he might win," said Allan Hawco of MacIvor's Canadian Screen Award for original screenplay. *Weirdos* also won the supporting actress for Molly Parker. "There's so many great films out there and the thought our little movie has made an impact — I'm pretty proud of that."

MacIvor's unique skill

"He has such insight to what we are as people," said Hawco of Daniel

MacIvor's award-winning script. "He's able to shine a certain light on it that I think is difficult at times (but) his whole body of work has got that with a light touch of humor."

Hollywood vs home

"If I could be married to both and disappear for a few months to do amazing work, that would be the ultimate dream," said Hawco of choosing a career in Canada over Hollywood. "I just don't like leaving the province."



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Baruchel's triple duties for coming Goon sequel



Canadian actor Jay Baruchel had multiple roles in *Goon: Last of the Enforcers*. He has an acting role, directs the film, and wrote the sequel. THE CANADIAN PRESS

SPORTS FLICKS

He acts, writes, directs hockey sequel with starry cast

With co-writer and cast member credit on *Goon: Last of the Enforcers*, Jay Baruchel also happens to be the hockey film's director — a role he likens to being a coach on a bench.

"I didn't put skates on once this movie," said the wise-cracking, Montreal-raised comedy star, who's brought an idiosyncratic charm to films including *Knocked Up*, *Tropic Thunder* and *This Is the End*. "I needed to project confidence wherever possible. I had dozens of piss-and-vinegar 20-year-old men to boss around and I didn't need them to see me skating like an idiot."

The ardent Montreal Canadiens fan took the helm for *Goon: Last of the Enforcers* because the original film's director, Michael Dowse, was unavailable to make the sequel, which hits theatres Friday.

"It took some time because we didn't make this movie for cynical reasons," said Baruchel, who now lives in Toronto. "I think a lot of times when you get a sequel inside of a year, it's because bean

counters have dollar signs in their eyes.

"We didn't need to make this movie; we wanted to, though, and we wanted to make the movie that these characters and our fans deserve. We took it very seriously and anything important takes time."

Baruchel co-stars in both films as the foul-mouthed best friend to Seann William Scott's leading character, a sweet and simple-minded minor league hockey enforcer named Doug (The Thug) Glatt.

In the sequel, an injury forces Doug to leave the Halifax Islanders and find a job selling insurance. Alison Pill plays his pregnant wife, who patiently stands by his side as he tries to return to the team.

Other returning cast members include Liev Schreiber and Marc-Andre Grondin as players who also find themselves contemplating a life after the ice.

New cast members include Wyatt Russell as a villainous team captain and Elisha Cuthbert as the beer-chugging best

friend to Pill's character.

Baruchel said he and Jesse Chabot wrote the sequel because they felt there was an appetite for a followup to the original, which earned \$4.1 million at Canadian theatres in 2012 — more than any other homegrown English-language feature film that year.

"It's not with every year *Goon* fades into the rear view. It's more surprisingly quite the opposite," said Baruchel, noting he's met fans who've memorized the script and have tattoos of the characters.

The success of the first film is also partly what drew Scott back.

"Even the reviews were good, which never happens for me," quipped Scott, who played jock Steve Stifler in the *American Pie* franchise.

Baruchel aimed to make the filming of the sequel a collaborative process.

"I also wanted absolutely everyone on my set to feel that it was their sandbox," said Baruchel.

"Anybody could pitch me something and so there are

moments in that movie that I didn't come up with."

The sequel has just as much — if not more — blood and brawls as the first.

Scott, who had never played hockey before *Goon*, said he and Russell didn't use stunt doubles for their brutal final fight.

"At the end of the fight we both look totally spent and that wasn't far from the truth," said Scott.

As a director, Baruchel was "a total natural," said Scott: "I've been lucky to work with a lot of really great comedy directors and Jay is my favourite."

So, will Baruchel do another?

"Well, Doug is retired and it's not Rocky where he will retire and then come out of retirement four ... times," said Baruchel with a laugh, using an unprintable expletive.

"But I think we have such a deep world we've created populated by some pretty real and vivid characters that there is more story to tell, in our minds."

Scott said he's also on-board. But would he do another *American Pie* film?

"*American Death*," he quipped. "No, I actually think it would be really fun to see Stifler in his 40s just being the exact same. Or maybe it would be sad. I think we're done with them."

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Fans rebel against Matrix remake rumour

MOVIE REMAKES

Social media protests any sci-fi film tampering

A reboot of *The Matrix* is said to be the works, but many fans would rather see Warner Bros. choose a different pill.

The Hollywood Reporter on Tuesday reported that Warner Bros. is developing a relaunch of the 1999 film, which spawned two far less beloved sequels. Any new *Matrix* film is in such an early stage that it may — like countless other projects in development — never amount to anything. Warner Bros. declined to share any details on its plans on Wednesday.

But the report was enough to stoke a backlash on social media over any tampering with the Wachowskis' trench-coated, slow-motion bullet-flying science-fiction creation. Reboots, you may have noticed, are a tad common for Hollywood these days. And while repaving old favourites often causes consternation among fans, the possibility of a new *Matrix* touched a nerve.

IN THE MATRIX

Why is the prospect of more *Matrix* particularly jarring? Here are a few reasons why:

No Wachowskis They aren't currently attached as directors for the new project.

Originality was the main thrill of *The Matrix* A remake goes against the movie's defining quality.

Too Soon Though quick reboots have happened before, *The Matrix* doesn't yet feel especially dated. But as Hollywood begins veering into the '90s for remake-ready intellectual property, Generation X is beginning to experience what has long been a constant for baby boomers.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

On one hand, the dystopian vision of *The Matrix*, about a rebellion against machine-controlled rule, would seem ideal for today. After all, many have

recently suggested the world has tipped into a simulated reality of its own. The time may be ripe for the deep "rabbit-hole" diving Laurence Fishburne's Morpheus advocated.

Also, initially wounded fan feelings have been known to soften under the right conditions. Get the right talent involved, secure the necessary blessings, talk about "mining" the story's boundless "universe" and you could — come opening weekend — have a *Matrix* version of the *The Force Awakens* on your hands. But there's also reason to believe moviegoers are increasingly saying no to cash-grab reboots. The reasons for their demises were various, but last summer was a graveyard of underwhelming redos, including *Alice Through the Looking Glass*, *Independence Day: Resurgence* and *Ghostbusters*.

Still, remakes and sequels remain, overwhelmingly, the biggest box-office hits. Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*, another refashioned '90s fairy tale (albeit one with fewer sunglasses), is expected to open with more than \$130 million in ticket sales this weekend and may ultimately gross \$1 billion worldwide.

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Laurence Fishburne, Keanu Reeves, Jada Pinkett Smith and Hugo Weaving were mainstays in the original *Matrix* trilogy. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Mother Nature and vampire mermaids

A little bit more about three movies that are being released this weekend

1 After The Storm

(Starring Hiroshi Abe, Yoko Maki, Kirin Kiki and Taiyo Yoshizawa; Written and directed by Hirokazu Kore-eda; 117 minutes; PG) Typhoons rage across Japan in Hirokazu Kore-eda's bittersweet *After the Storm*, but they're nothing compared to the personal tempests of his male protagonist Ryota (Hiroshi Abe).

Winner of a major literary prize 15 years ago for his debut novel, prophetically titled *The Empty Table*, Ryota, a former wunderkind author, has sunk into despondent middle age.

His father and wife recently left him, one through death and the other through marital collapse. Ryota's muse has also abandoned him, although he still pretends to write. Shaggy in looks and demeanour, he works as the sleaziest of private detectives, shaking down both his prey and his clients.

Ryota snoops into the foibles of others while being blind to his own: a gambling addiction that leaves him constantly broke. No wonder his wife Kyoko (Yoko Maki) finally moved out.

The only people Ryota can count on are his aging mother Yoshiko (Kirin Kiki, always great) and his young son Shingo (Taiyo Yoshizawa), who tolerate him as much as love him.

When Ryota describes himself to mama as a "great-talents-bloom-late type," she gently scolds, "You're taking too long to bloom."

This would be grist for the mills of filmmakers seeking strong drama or dark comedy, but Kore-eda sagely follows a different path. He's a master of soulful humanity and a keen observer of family ties, as seen in his best film, *Like Father, Like Son*, which won him a jury prize at Cannes 2013.

Kore-eda's life messages are imparted with the lightest of touches. The rage inside his lens comes



only from the weather in After the Storm, which forces Ryota, Shingo and Kyoto to take refuge one night inside Yoshiko's tiny flat in a Tokyo suburb.

Is Mother Nature assisting mama Yoshiko's not-so-subtle family reunification plans? Maybe, but Kore-eda isn't out to force anything. His films follow the recipe advice Yoshiko includes for one of her sumptuous dishes: "Cool it down slowly and let it sit overnight — just like people."

2 The Lure (Starring Marta Mazurek and Michalina Olszanska; Directed by Agnieszka Smoczyńska; 92 minutes; 18A)

Here's a wild logline for you: Two hungry, horny and topless vampire mermaids form a pop band and run wild on dry land.

Too bad the shipwreck of a screenplay can't keep up with the visuals, which are pretty great — the film won a jury prize for "unique vision and design" at Sundance.

The film by Poland's

Agnieszka Smoczyńska stars Marta Mazurek and Michalina Olszańska as mermaid sisters Srebrna and Złota, who leave their watery domain to become nightclub singers. They also snack on a few patrons — although trouble really starts when love abruptly intrudes.

In case you're wondering — and of course you are — their tails disappear when they're out of the water. The two women are topless for much of the movie, another novelty for a picture that ambitiously courts mainstream as well as midnight audiences.

3 The Sense of an Ending
(Starring Jim Broadbent, Charlotte Rampling;
Directed by Ritesh Batra;
109 minutes; 14A)

Memory is a tricky thing and sometimes what we thought we knew turns out to be not quite the case. Such as the ways life unfolds for an aging Englishman as the past intrudes into the present.

Director Ritesh Batra

adapts the Man Booker Prize-winning novel into a contemplative but compelling tale about regret, remorse and redemption.

As always, Jim Broadbent is a joy to behold. He's Tony Webster, who's semi-retired but operates a specialty camera shop in part because of a young woman named Veronica he knew during his halcyon days at university.

News of an inheritance, along with the diary of a long-departed college friend who died by suicide, throws Webster's life into turmoil.

Two parallel stories unfold, with the past and present seeming to collide and merge, as Webster seeks to find a measure of inner peace.

The cast is uniformly solid, including Charlotte Rampling, who delivers a subtle but powerful performance as the mysterious Veronica. Be prepared for unexpected twists.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



GETTY IMAGES

'Good clothes open doors'

HOLLYWOOD FASHION

Tinseltown's top stylist works magic with Paulson

If Sarah Paulson didn't have a stylist, she would only wear sweatpants.

The silvery Marc Jacobs sheath she wore to the Golden Globes and the dazzling emerald dress she donned at the Emmys were picked out by a professional.

"My green Prada dress that I wore to the Emmys (pictured left) was so heavy that at one point I thought I was going to throw my neck out," Paulson said. "But it did not matter to me because it was the best dress I've ever had on my body."

Fresh off her SAG, Golden Globe and Emmy Award wins for playing Marcia Clark in *American Crime Story*, Paulson is celebrating the woman who put together all those red carpet looks: Karla Welch, whom the *Hollywood Reporter* just named the industry's

DITCHING THE SWEATPANTS How Sarah Paulson found her groove



most powerful stylist.

Welch, along with Paulson and fellow red carpet stand-out Ruth Negga, appears on the cover of the magazine's special *Stylists & Stars* issue, which ranks Tinseltown's 25 top stylists.

"Good clothes open doors," Welch quipped when asked the best bit of style advice she ever received.

"I need her to push me out of my sweatpants and my sneakers," Paulson said Tuesday night at a Jimmy Choo-sponsored dinner honouring the magazine's

sartorial stars. John Legend, Justin Timberlake, Dakota Johnson, Jonah Hill, Mary J. Blige and Mahershala Ali were among the well-dressed guests at the private party at The Ponte restaurant.

Though Paulson prefers leisurewear, she loves the ritual of getting ready for the red carpet. Having a spectacular dress to wear helps her achieve the right mindset for a million flashbulbs and screaming fans.

"A lot of people talk about it as being a kind of armour, and it is," she said.

Even with the help of Hollywood's top stylist, the actress said her love of sweatpants has led to some fashion regrets.

"It's not that I regret them. It's just that I know if I get photographed in them at the grocery store, I'll think, 'Oh (expletive). This is when I'm supposed to wear that jacket she told me to wear,'" Paulson said. "Then 800 people on Instagram are like, 'She's such a bum on her night off.' Really? I'm supposed to look fashionable when I'm going out to get half-and-half?" THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

POSH TARGET

Retail giant banks on the Victoria Beckham effect

Target is counting on Victoria Beckham to spice up sales.

The pop-star-turned-designer and Target teased looks on Wednesday from a collaboration that go on sale next month, highlighting hot-pink pants suits and whimsical black-and-white dresses. The 200 items priced from \$6 to \$70 also include tops, trousers and rompers for women, as well as some matching children's items.

It's the first foray into children's wear for Beckham, the former Spice Girl who launched her namesake fashion brand in 2008.

"I wanted to offer a collection of clothes to women who either couldn't afford designer prices or didn't want to pay designer prices," Beckham told *The Associated Press*.

"Target is about being inclusive and that is something that is very important to me as a brand as well."

Target announced the collaboration in October, and the items will be available April 9.

Beckham, noting that the collection also includes items like colouring books, says the inspiration was the things she and her daughter Harper do together.

"It's really about me and her and our relationship and our shared experience," Beckham said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



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Dalila Bela as Diana Barry. Amybeth McNulty as Anne Shirley, in Anne on CBC — the latest iteration of Anne of Green Gables.

PHOTO CREDIT IN SMALL CAPS

Anne of Green Gables: the accidental feminist

TELEVISION

New CBC drama updates tale for today's audiences

The themes and lessons from *Anne of Green Gables*, set almost 150 years in the past, are more relevant than ever today, says the writer of the CBC's upcoming television series based on the Canadian classic.

"To start with, Anne was an accidental feminist, she was boundary-free, she believed in gender parity. The fact that she was a girl never deterred her from anything and she had no expectations that it would," Anne writer and executive producer Moira Walley-Beckett (*Breaking Bad*, *Flesh and Bone*) said during a visit to the Toronto studio where the majority of Anne was shot.

"The issues that she experienced . . . here are issues that everyone is experiencing now: themes of prejudice and identity and bullying, being from away and not being accepted, and not belonging and all of those issues are not only in the book but issues I've really brought to the forefront of this series."

Producer Miranda de Pencier, whose credits include *Beginners* and *Wild Roses*, agrees.

"There's no point making

(a TV series) if we feel it's not going to connect to audiences," said de Pencier, who played supporting character Josie Pye in the CBC's 1985 *Anne of Green Gables* miniseries.

"We also don't think of this as a historic drama. This is not a dry, removed show. . . . We like to think it's as contemporary as today; it just happened to be in another time period."

Drawing from the 1908 novel by Canadian author Lucy Maud Montgomery, Anne is at its core the coming-of-age story of 13-year-old Anne Shirley, an audacious, adventurous, red-headed orphan sent to the fictional town of Avonlea in Prince Edward Island to live with aging siblings Marilla and Matthew Cuthbert (played by Geraldine James and R.H. Thomson).

Trouble begins almost immediately, though, as the Cuthberts had asked the orphanage for a boy to help run their idyllic farm of Green Gables, and Anne finds herself fighting to prove her worth to them while struggling, at times, to fit into her new community and build an identity for herself.

self along the way.

Walley-Beckett says she "treated the book with reverence" and as a "framework" when writing the script for Anne, but viewers can also look forward to new story lines and characters as well as deeper explorations into existing ones. For example, farmhand Jerry Baynard, who's mentioned in one line of the book, will get his own plot in the series.

"We're off-book by the end of Episode 1 except for some beloved, iconic moments," Walley-Beckett said. "I really wanted an opportunity to go deeper with these characters."

One of those moments includes Anne's expression of hatred for her long, red locks, something 15-year-old lead actress Amybeth McNulty said was one of the few things about the character she couldn't relate to.

"I love this red hair, I'm going to be honest," said McNulty, a natural blond who landed the part after auditioning with a four-page monologue ("Oh, this girl talks so much!").

The Irish-Canadian, who hadn't been to Canada before filming Anne and had to work with a dialect coach to help her nail the local accent, said she tapped into a very personal place to help bring Anne to life: the story of her great-grandmother who, at 11 years old, was an orphan and slave in Ireland.

"To go through that is traumatic, but my great-grandmother kept her spirit up and so did Anne, and that was a very beautiful merge," McNulty said.

"There's things that happened to Anne that are the exact same things that happened to my great-grandmother, which was heartbreaking but a wonderful, wonderful experience to go through and say, 'This really happened, this isn't just a story, this isn't just fake or entertainment, this is what really happened and I'm going to show you exactly how.'"

And, like Walley-Beckett, McNulty also believes Anne's new take on the classic story will resonate with audiences of all ages.

"It was a little nerve-wracking, I'll admit, because (Anne of Green Gables) is so well-loved and it's sacred ground, but I don't like to think of it as changing it," she said. "It's just sacred ground that we're planting seeds in."

Anne premieres on CBC Sunday at 8 p.m. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



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Oprah's TV mojo is back on Greenleaf

TELEVISION

Mogul appears in the most-watched drama on her network

Oprah Winfrey had long been looking for something that would keep OWN viewers from switching to other channels. The answer to her prayers turned out to be a juicy drama series set in a house of worship.

Greenleaf, which co-stars Winfrey in a recurring role, premiered last year as the most-watched debut in the six-year history of her network and has given the media mogul a boost of confidence.

"It helped me trust my instincts, because for the first couple of years of OWN, I lost a sense of what would work or not," Winfrey said. "We were trying to do so many different things. Trying, trying and trying things all the time. When this worked, I thought 'OK, I

now see that when you move and operate specifically from the core of what you believe is right, it works.'"

Greenleaf delves into a story about the troubled first family of a sprawling Memphis, Tennessee, megachurch where adultery and domestic abuse causes disorder. The second season of the show premieres Wednesday at 10 p.m. EDT on OWN.

The show stars Merle Dandridge as Grace "Gigi" Greenleaf, the estranged daughter who returns home after 20 years and is trying to investigate her family's past crimes. Her character has been thrust into the pulpit as a

pastor at her family's megachurch business, which is ran by her parents, Bishop James (Keith David) and Lady Mae (Lynn Whitfield). Winfrey plays the role of bar owner Mavis McCready, the sister of Lady Mae.

Whitfield said she's always trusted Winfrey's vision, but she initially wondered how viewers would perceive the show, which Winfrey is co-executive producer.

"We didn't know what it was going to be like," Whitfield said. "But going through the summer and seeing how social media critiqued it, people really loved and craved the story. It shows her instincts were right."

Winfrey believed she had a compelling story on her hands with Greenleaf, knowing the show was "meaningful, juicy and soapy" enough to draw consistent viewers but wondered if the numbers would ultimately back that up. Her worries were short lived after she saw the first season's overall ratings.

The results caused Winfrey to breathe a sigh of relief, especially since there was no huge market-



Oprah Winfrey and Lynn Whitfield play sisters in the OWN TV drama Greenleaf. CONTRIBUTED

ing budget behind Greenleaf. The network tried to use the leverage of Tyler Perry, who created the network's biggest hits like The Haves and Have Nots, but struggled for years fill the void until Greenleaf.

Winfrey said the show brought new energy to her network.

"In the past, we couldn't get Tyler's audience to stay for anything," she said. "They would just come in and then they go. So to be able to get a great per-

centage of his audience, I think around 70 per cent, to stay tuned for something else other than a Tyler-produced show, it was a new feat for us. It was a new accomplishment for us."

Some originally thought Greenleaf would be an attack on black churches. But that wasn't how the show was received by churchgoers who watched the series, said Dandridge.

"They really embraced it," said the actor, acknowledging that

her family who attends black churches supports the show's content. "It's powerfully meaningful to me. I think for some people, they are like voyeurs of what happens behind those walls."

With the success of Greenleaf, it opened the door for another hit show on OWN: Queen Sugar.

"With both shows, we're trying to hit the nerve of reality that resides in every person," Winfrey said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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The show also pulled in an average of more than 3.2 million viewers, second behind Tyler Perry's hit show The Haves and Have Nots, which averaged 3.7 million, according to Nielsen.

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Electronic creator isn't in the remix business

MUSIC PRODUCTION

Trentmoller plans to focus more on his own music

Don't expect to be hearing any new Trentmoller remixes anytime soon.

Anders Trentmoller, the electronic production wizard who built much of his reputation conducting high-profile remixes for Moby, Depeche Mode, Franz Ferdinand, Royskopp, Robyn and others, has curtailed that aspect of his career... at least for the time being.

"I think maybe I gave some of my best ideas to remixes — and that was fine — but I really wanted the focus to be on my music felt that it took up too much time," said the affable Dane on Tuesday, down the line prior to a show in Los Angeles to promote his latest album Fixion.

"So I don't do remixes anymore. I also don't want to end up as a remix artist."

By the same token, Trentmoller is grateful for the lessons learned in deconstructing and reconstructing tracks such as Depeche Mode's Wrong.

Since he introduced his solo work with 2006's highly acclaimed The Last Resort, the 42-year-old has been working on developing a hybrid sound between electronic and electric instruments — something he says marries his past with his present.

"I started playing many, many years ago — when I was five or six — on my parents' piano," Trentmoller recalls. "Then I started playing in some really bad cover bands, a blues band — and at one point I tried to do some Britpop-inspired stuff."

"But I always wrote my own songs back then — mainly instrumental stuff. Then I turned to electronic sound and now I'm kind of back again, full circle, because I'm trying to mix both the worlds together. I'm just at the place I want to be right now."

Like its predecessors — with the exception of 2013's guest vocalist-dominated Lost — Fixion was composed recorded entirely by Trentmoller with minimal outside input.

"Most of the time in the studio, it's just me alone," he suggests. "I'm writing and producing and mixing the music. After the album is done, I get the band together and find out which songs the band will play live."

A 12-song effort that features an atmospheric mixture of cinematic, forlorn and explosive electronic soundscapes mixed with philosophical lyrics and scented with the vocals of long-time Trentmoller cohort Marie Fisker and Savages singer Jehnnny Beth, Fixion also carries notable nods to some of the artist's post-punk influences, particularly Joy Division.

In fact, there are a couple of songs — Never Fade and Re-define — where Peter Hook's trademark rubbery bass sound is front and centre, although the bassist himself is nowhere to be found.

Trentmoller said it wasn't intentional.

"It just happened when I started writing these songs, but especially the basslines," says Trentmoller. "After I started doing one or two of the songs, that bass sound stayed on this album."

He says he also tries to balance out the "melancholic vibe" with "more uplifting" moments.

A cited influence of deadmau5, Trentmoller says he will have a brand new song out in April and is looking forward to playing Toronto next week — his band just polishing off a run of 40 European dates.

"We're playing eight or nine songs from the new album and of course, the more classic stuff, so it will be a blast," he declares, adding that he sees more creative evolution ahead.

"I don't think that I have found my definitive sound or reached my goal. I'm always searching for something that can still thrill me and make me curious."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



Anders Trentmoller is a veteran EDM musician and producer. CONTRIBUTED

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Model

Rockers' fear and angst is à la mode

NEW RELEASE

Depeche Mode return with a soundtrack for turbulent times

Depeche Mode's new album kicks off with a dire warning that we're going backward as a society. Things go quickly downhill from there.

Spirit then tells us we've been lied to and advocates revolution, convicts everyone of treason and urges selfish scum to turn their guns on themselves — and that's just the first four songs.

"First and foremost, we wanted to make a fun album," deadpans chief songwriter Martin Gore. "That was a joke."

The gloomy British electronic trio resurfaced this month with its first new music in four years and the timing seems impeccable. The dozen new dark songs seem the perfect soundtrack to a world rocked by Brexit and Donald Trump.

"It's a little bit of a heavy listen," acknowledges lead singer Dave Gahan. "Look, that's what we do. It's about creating these

atmospheres with this backdrop of the world we're living in."

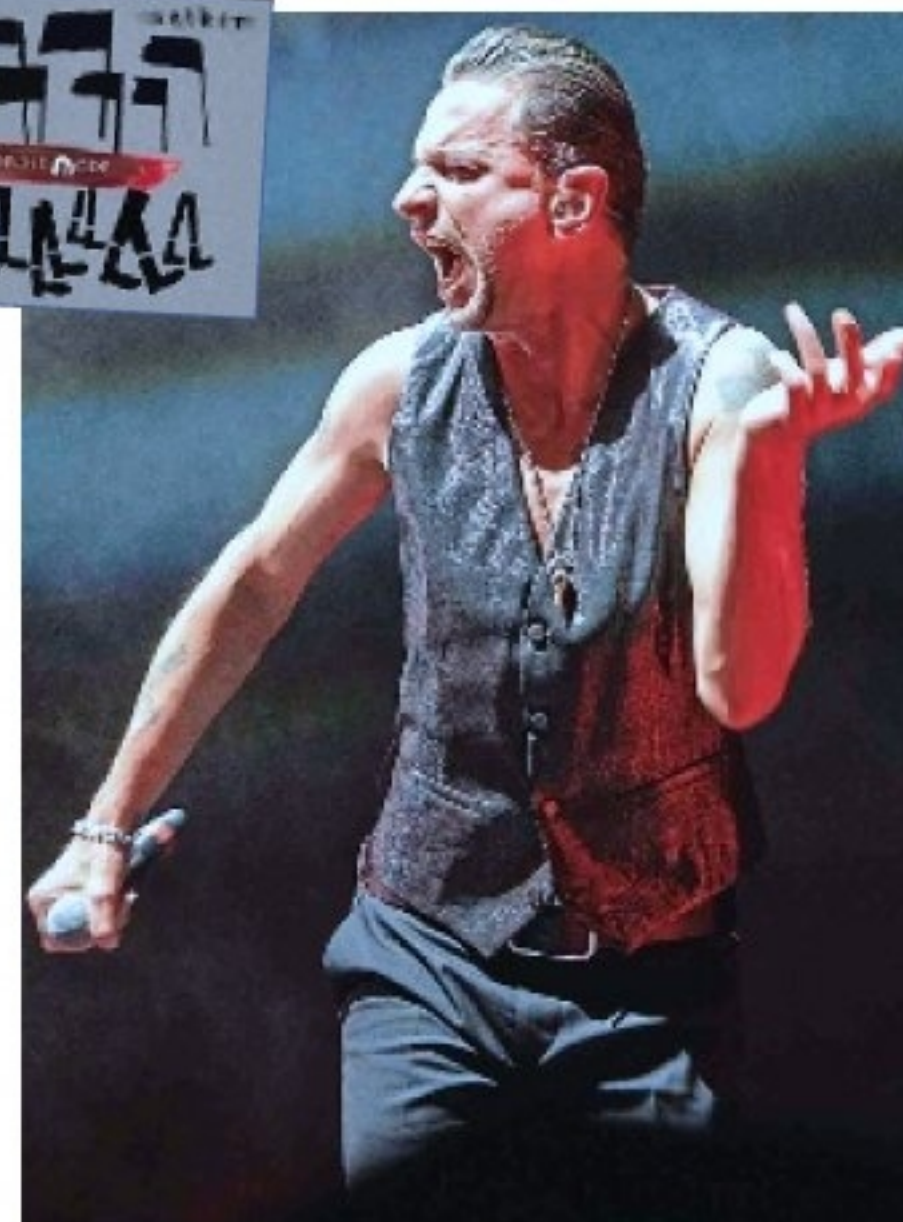
Spirit continues the band's evolution in alternative-rock under the new guidance of producer James Ford, who has worked with Florence and the Machine and the Arctic Monkeys.

Band member Andy Fletcher said Ford, who also played drums on many of the tracks, managed to "freshen us up a bit." The songs are drenched in dread, slithering synths and strong hooks, exploring everything from trickle-down economics to heartbreak.

Gore said the album might sound like a reaction to recent political and cultural shocks but was actually written in the late 2015 and early 2016.

"The world was still in a mess then and it was quite depressing to me. I felt that I couldn't just ignore it. If I was going to actually write and be honest to myself I had to kind of like face it," he said.

Depeche Mode will go on the road — their 28-show North American tour starts in Salt Lake City in August — mixing the new songs with their go-to anchors, including I Feel You and Walking In My Shoes. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Dave Gahan and Depeche Mode matured from their 1980's heyday to an edgier sound on new album *Spirit*. GETTY IMAGES/AP FILE

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Gossip DIGEST — JUSSIE, DEMI AND CHELSEA

1 Jussie Smollett sings about Trump —

While TV star Jussie Smollett was in the recording studio working on his own music apart from *Empire*, he couldn't help but write a song about what's going in the world, from injustice to President Donald Trump. That's when he penned F.U.W., short for "(expletive) up world," around President's Day and immediately directed a music video to bring his words to life. The clip is up on his YouTube page. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

2 Lovato has been sober five years —

Demi Lovato is celebrating five years of sobriety. The singer, 24, celebrated with an Instagram post on Wednesday. She writes that "it's been quite the journey," adding, "so many times I wanted to relapse but sat on my hands and begged God to relieve the obsession." Lovato is currently an advocate for mental health awareness. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

3 Chelsea Clinton: children's author —

Chelsea Clinton has written a children's book, with a sharply worded title. The book is called *She Persisted* — out May 30. Clinton will honour 13 American women "who never take no for an answer," including Harriet Tubman, Sonia Sotomayor and Oprah Winfrey. The book will be illustrated by Alexandra Boiger. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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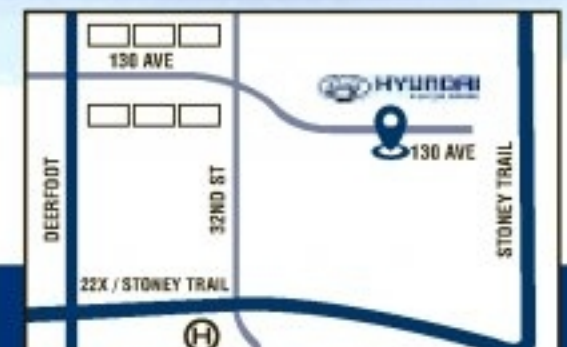
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FAMILY DRAMA

This is Us finale had a dual focus

This is Us creator Dan Fogelman helpfully explains his time-twisting family drama's ambitious theme: A vision of shared humanity, without end.

"There's no dying. There's no you, or me, or them. It's just us," character Kevin says in a fifth-episode scene singled out by Fogelman as key.

"It has always been part of our conceit that people die but stay a very active part of the lives of both the people who knew and loved them" and the generations that follow, the writer-producer said.

But do not, even for a moment, expect his courtesy to extend to revelations for those who haven't seen this week's season finale of the hit NBC drama, already renewed through 2019.

Fogelman says the season-ender is a showcase for Ventimiglia and Moore. While they're part of a gifted ensemble cast, their characters' unexpected journey and the actors' chemistry made them

standouts.

Following Jack and Rebecca, their three children and others connected to them isn't a linear experience. This is Us hopscoches between decades past and present as we meet people at different stages in their lives.

Think of it as thirtysomething meets Lost, everyday pathos sliced into a jigsaw puzzle.

But that intrigue likely is part of the drama's success. This is Us has broken into the top 10 shows among total viewers, unusual for a freshman series, and is a big winner with advertiser-coveted young adult viewers ages 18 to 49 and with women.

Its numbers are only getting better. The Mar. 7 episode drew its biggest audience yet, 11.2 million, and attracted 20 per cent more young adults than its prior telecast. Among young adult women, This Is Us is the No. 1 broadcast program for the season.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Milo Ventimiglia as Jack on This Is Us. CONTRIBUTED

Stephan James, a rising star, is now a leading man

MINISERIES

Scarborough native's acting career has skyrocketed

Keep an eye on Stephan James. The 23-year-old rising star hails from Scarborough, the star-making area of Toronto that was also home to Mike Myers, Eric McCormack, Barenaked Ladies and the Weeknd.

Five years ago, he was just another Canadian teen actor trying to make it on Degrassi: The Next Generation. After "Degrassi" ("a Canadian rite of passage," he says), he worked his way up the local series ladder on How to Be Indie, The Listener and The LA Complex.

He was nominated for a Canadian Screen Award in director Sudz Sutherland's 2012 feature Home Again and then made a big step up playing civil rights activist John Lewis in 2014's Oscar-nominated Selma.

The Book of Negroes followed and then last year, James was cast as American Olympic sprinter Jesse Owens in Race, which earned him another Canadian Screen Award nomination.

Now he's the guy you can't take your eyes off of opposite Helen Hunt, Richard Dreyfus, Stephan Moyer and Jill Hennessy in Shots Fired, a 10-part event series airing Wednesdays on Fox and City.

"It's been incredible," says James of his career so far. "I've been extremely blessed with incredible opportunities to work with phenomenal actors and directors so early in my career. Blessings on blessings."

James plays special prosecutor Preston Terry, a hotshot Yale



Conor Leslie and Helen Hunt star in the television show Shots Fired. THE CANADIAN PRESS

grad parachuted into a potentially explosive murder investigation. He's paired with a seen-it-all police veteran, Ashe Akino (played by Sanaa Lathan).

The case they're investigating: an unarmed white college student has been shot in broad daylight by a black police deputy (Tristan Wilds). This brings to light the neglected murder, days earlier, of a young African American. Officials with the Department of Justice, along with the governor (Helen Hunt), are counting on cool-headed Akino and Terry to defuse a racial time bomb.

There are echoes of real-life

police shootings and as Dreyfus — who plays a local real estate mogul — told TV critics in Pasadena, Calif., earlier this year: "We shot probably the most current show you'll ever see.... This is America."

Husband and wife showrunners Reggie Rock Bythewood and Gina Prince-Bythewood looked at hundreds of actors for the key role of Preston Terry. The writer/producers needed someone who would not get blown off the screen by Lathan, the commanding film and TV veteran they hand-picked to play Terry's seasoned police partner.

The producers were also look-

ing for a young actor who could seem like he was prep school educated and athletic but also had an edge.

James was impressed with the Shots Fired script, as was fellow Canadian Hennessy, who plays the mother of a student gunned down in the pilot.

James felt he'd never seen a character like Terry on TV before.

"His whole life, he has defied the odds of what people thought he should be," says James. Destined to be a superstar athlete, "instead he wanted to change the world."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Forgotten fashion of Expo 67

EXHIBITION

Montreal museum displays dress and uniforms

Fifty years after Montreal hosted a world's fair to mark Canada's centennial, Expo 67 is generally remembered for art, architecture and infrastructure rather than miniskirts.

But that's something Montreal's McCord Museum is trying to change with Fashioning Expo 67, an exhibit that seeks to resurrect what its curator calls a "forgotten moment" in Canadian fashion.

To commemorate the city's 375th birthday and Expo's 50-year anniversary, the museum has assembled more than 60 outfits from the fair, from hostess uniforms to the designer duds that graced the runways of the exposition's numerous fashion shows.

The exhibit also includes archival TV footage, images, documents, sketches and audio interviews with the designers themselves.

From groovy summer dresses worn by roller-skating models to fur coats and ballgowns, Expo 67 was a moment of "tremendous pride" in Canadian fashion, according to exhibit curator Cyn-



Uniforms and dresses from Expo 67 on display at the McCord Museum. Left: A black and white photograph of Expo hostess Jane MacKenzie at the fair in 1967. THE CANADIAN PRESS



thia Cooper.

"Expo created a lot of opportunities for

the fashion milieu," she said. "(Designers') messages were very similar (to that of the fair): of being optimistic, avant-garde, very forward-looking, very modern and contemporary."

She describes 1967 as a time of transition in women's fashion,

when designers were just beginning to make the shift from more formal, structured clothing to the skin-baring, psychedelic styles that would define the late '60s.

That tension between old and new is evident in the exhibit's collection of about a dozen official hostess outfits, designed for the young women who served as official greeters at the fair's 90 pavilions.

It was a time when the miniskirt was just coming into fashion, and uniform designers had

to grapple with whether to embrace the modern style or go with a traditionally professional look.

For the record, Canada played it relatively safe with a light-blue jacket and knee-length skirt combo, designed by Quebec's Michel Robichaud.

Britain, on the other hand, went with a daring striped mini and proudly proclaimed all its hostesses "would wear skirts four inches above the knee and have nice legs," Cooper said.

More than 50 million people

travelled to the island southeast of Montreal between April and October 1967 to visit the various pavilions, exhibits and displays, all designed around the theme Man and His World.

Opportunities for Canadian designers were everywhere, from outfitting dignitaries to showing off their wares at various fashion shows.

The McCord's collection includes four formal gowns designed for Marie-Claire Boucher Drapeau, wife of Montreal's then-

mayor, Jean Drapeau.

Another section shows the colorful, casual summer clothing worn by models on roller skates during a weekly fashion show at the Canadian pavilion known as "the great Canadian fashion caper."

The politics of the day seeped into the garments, despite organizers' best efforts to keep the event neutral.

Quebec designer Jacques de Montjoye shocked a fashion show audience with a dress called "Vietnam": a tunic with a red splotch designed to look like a bloodstain, worn under an American flag-patterned cape.

Another Montjoye creation, a green dress depicting a snow-covered tree, is titled *Mon pays c'est l'hiver* — a tribute to Gilles Vigneault's *Mon pays*, a song that has become an anthem of Quebec's nationalist movement.

Despite the widespread presence of fashion at Expo 67, Cooper isn't sure whether it had a long-term impact on Canadian design.

Unlike the public art and some of the pavilions that are still standing 50 years later, she says the fashion shows were quickly forgotten — perhaps due to what she calls the "ephemeral" nature of fashion itself.

"Maybe it's because the (fashion) field has to always look to the future," she said. "When something is over they have to be look to the next thing and not sit on their laurels remembering what a wonderful moment Expo was."

Fashioning Expo 67 runs from March 17 to Oct. 1.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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The *urban* Cuba you don't know

It's a shame, really: 99 per cent of Canadians visiting Cuba stay in resorts. That's not an exaggeration; it's a quote from the director of Cuba's tourism board. We go for the sun and sand, complain about the resort food, and — while we may do a day trip — go home without really appreciating the island nation. Venture off resort, and you'll encounter a country on the cusp of change, rich in history and home to amazing and resilient people. Here are a few things you'll see.

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY DEAN LISK/METRO CANADA

Eternal Havana

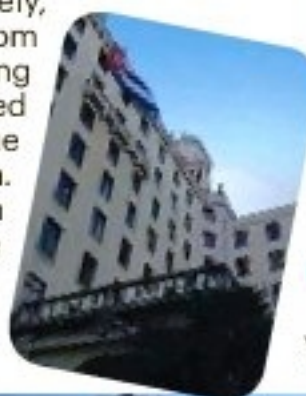
While the sharp details of the cornices, balustrades and mouldings of Havana's patchwork-painted buildings are eroding like water poured over a sugar cube, they are not dead or abandoned spaces. The sounds of daily life still filter through the half-open shutters or the cracked window glass.

A move is underway in Old Havana, founded in 1519, to restore many of these once- and still-elegant buildings using tourism revenue. Others are being restored privately, including a five-storey building across from Parque Central which once housed a shopping arcade and schools. The gutted, sand-blasted and re-painted interior will soon open as the **Gran Hotel Manzana Kempinski La Habana**. The luxury hotel includes a rooftop pool with views of the Great Theatre of Havana and the dome of the Capital.

Rich in history, the **Hotel Nacional de Cuba** stands on a small hill above the wave-etched Malecón sea wall in the Vedado neighbourhood. Built in 1930 with the understanding it would only ever fly the Cuban flag, it is a silent character in national events that have played out since its construction.

Some of the rooms in the eight-floor hotel are named after its famous guests, like Errol Flynn, Fred Astaire, Rita Hayworth and Nat King Cole. A mafia suite pays homage to a summit U.S. gangsters held in the hotel in 1946 organized by Lucky Luciano and Meyer Lansky. An adjoining door opens to the one used by Frank Sinatra and Ava Gardner. The walls of the private bar, open only to hotel guests, is lined with photos of all the famous people who have stayed there over the last 85 years.

While many hotels have in-house restaurants, try exploring Havana's ripening culinary scene instead. Rent an oldtimer (the classic 1950s cars still being used) or a coco taxi (a two-seater car pulled by a bicycle) and head out to one of the city's best restaurants. **San Cristóbal** — where Barack Obama ate when he visited in 2016 — is one the growing number of paladares (privately-owned restaurants, as opposed to state-operated ones) infusing the capital's food scene with innovative takes on traditional dishes. The Cuban-Creole menu includes lobster, steak, fresh local fish and roasted pork.



Contemporary Culture

Yes, Havana has — for lack of a better term — hipsters. Lined up two deep along the wall encircling the **Fabrica de Arte Cubano**, a former factory transformed into an exhibition space, they wait to be allowed in to enjoy the music and performances in the Vedado region of the city.

Held in their hands or tucked in the pockets of their skinny jeans and slacks is a card given at the door on which bartenders will record what drinks are ordered. The old factory is a canvas on which Cubans are reflecting their own experiences in a post-Fidel Cuba. Once you are done with the art, music and dancing, you must show your card at the door and pay for your drinks. Lose the card and there is a penalty fee.

If your trip to Fabrica has you convinced you need a lesson in loosening your hips, **Currys Dance School** can help you with your backbone slide. The school is located across the street from Havana's only mosque and was recently renovated to allow more space for lessons, which cost 15 CUC an hour. A major investor in the school is Vancouverite Alessandra Quaglia. Coming to Havana for a number of years for an annual Salsa Festival, she ended up staying for a few extra months to improve her steps, and, after her visit, made the decision to invest in the space. "I just went with it," Quaglia says. "Once you get a taste of it, it's like a bug, an addiction."

To get a sense of how important dance and music is in Havana — and the rest of Cuba — no trip is complete without a visit to Tropicana. It's a bit of a cliché, but this outdoor show has been cha cha cha-ing along for more than 80 years with its head-dressed showgirls, baritone singers and elaborate stage numbers. Even if it's not your thing, you are given a cigar and a bottle of rum (one for four people to share) and your choice of cola or water so you can pour at 'libre' when you are seated.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: A model exhibits an original creation at Fábrica de Arte Cubano; dancers perform an Afro-Cuban dance; diners snap a photo outside San Cristóbal Paladar; the narrow streets of old Havana; and visitors line up outside Fábrica de Arte Cubano.

Historical Heroes and icons

With his death in November, you'd expect to see images of el comandante, Fidel Castro, throughout the capital city. His bearded portrait is there, but spying it is rare. You're more likely to see bereted **Che Guevara** — whose image appears prominently on the side of the Ministry of Interior Building — staring back at you from photographs, painting and street art.

More likely to turn your head from Cuban adoration is a literary hero, one from Cuba's liberators from Spain rather than from Capitalism, José Martí. A statue of the poet, journalist and philosopher looms over the Plaza de la Revolución, his bust sits in front of schools, and — standing with a child cradled in one arm and the other raised in defiance and pointing behind him, finger outstretched — staring from the plaza in front of the U.S. embassy.

Still, it's an American whose legend haunts the city and nearby countryside. Like the patron saint of tourism, Ernest Hemingway's memory looms as large as his drinking habits.

Shoulder-to-shoulder tourists pack into **La Bodeguita del Medio** at 10 a.m. for mojitos (the rum, sugar and mint-filled drink inspiring revelers to carve their names into the restaurant's wooden shuttered front facade), wait in line at El Floridita to sip on an afternoon or evening daiquiri, or pay their respect by leaning through the windows into the writer's home, Finca Vigia, a few kilometers outside Havana. There you can see the mounted heads of rare big game animals, bookshelves lined with well-read tomes and **Hemingway's war correspondent uniform** stiffly hanging in the closet off his bedroom. Outside, you can get a bit closer to Hemingway's pet cemetery where he buried his dogs; Black, Negrita, Linda and Neron (his pet cats apparently didn't warrant grave markers).



The authors of these pieces were hosted by Cuba Tourism, which didn't review or approve the stories.

5 AREAS OF CUBA YOU NEED TO VISIT

How safe is Cuba? Well, safe enough that hitchhiking is a part of the culture. Along the roads leading out of the city you will find people whose job it is to flag cars to bring you closer to your destination. Vehicles owned by the government, with empty seats, are obliged to stop. Ask the driver if they would like to be paid for the trip, but it's not always expected. Whether you decide to follow the local example — or rent a car for your stay — here are five places to visit. **METRO CANADA/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICES**



TORSTAR NEWS SERVICES

1 Guantnamo

Count the number of times you hear the Guantanamera. Jose Fernandez's song — about a failed romance and dedicated to the women of Guantnamo province — uses words from a poem by beloved Cuban revolutionary and poet Jose Marti. Anyone can belt out the chorus, "Guantanamera, guajira Guantanamera" and throw in a few "oye, oye's." Guantnamo is a province and city in southeastern Cuba that hopes to be known for more than just a military prison and catchy song — one negative, one positive. It's easy to see why Guantnamo would rather be known for something positive, namely its famous song, variations of which are used in the U.S. and Latin America to fight for peace and justice.



DEAN LISK/METRO CANADA

3 Viñales

This community in the western end of the island shares its name with the valley, a UNESCO World Heritage Site known for its outdoor activities — hiking, horseback riding — and unique steep-sided hills called mogotes.

During a visit to the region, Fidel Castro suggested the cliff face of one of the mogotes would be perfect for a mural. Local officials took his suggestion and ran with it.

The result is the Mural de la Prehistoria: a primary colour filled image of dinosaurs, humans and monsters. The site is popular with visitors — some even get married below the mural — and a restaurant nearby serves a traditional Cuban meal of rice and beans with pork and chicken. If you decide you'd like to stay overnight, many Cubans have opened their one-story homes so you can rent rooms (even entire houses). Called Casas Particulares, the prices range according to location and the season.



DEAN LISK/METRO CANADA

4 Matanzas

No need to search for the fountain of youth, or love, because both pools of slowly dripping water can be found around 50 metres underground in Cuevas de Bellamar near the city of Matanzas. Discovered by a Chinese worker in the 1860s, there are more than 750 metres of tunnels to visit (although the cave is much larger and still being explored).

While it took more than 40,000 years for the cave to develop — and it is still growing — the guided tour lasts 45 minutes and ends with a hot, humid and sometimes slippery staircase (with more than 200 steps) back to the surface. If you feel unsteady, guide Jesus recommends that don't you worry, that's just the water from the fountain of love working its magic on your heart.

If there is an issue above ground in Matanzas take a trip back in time to the Boteca Francesca Dr. E Triolet. While it stopped operating as a pharmacy in 1964, it is now a museum where glass jars and canisters still hold some of the ingredients used to fill prescriptions. Founded in 1882, the pharmacy was famous distributing a coffee syrup used to treat asthma, as well as concocted wine-based remedies for anemia and a scorpion-infused oil for kidney problems.

The city is also known for its Afro-Cuban culture, including Los Muñequitos de Matanzas, a folklore and rumba dance and music group that performs in Ruinas de Matasiete. The world famous group started performing in the 1950s and demonstrate the development of this sensual yet respectful dance and its different styles; yambú, columbia and guaguancó.



TORSTAR NEWS SERVICES

2 Baracoa

You need at least four days to properly appreciate this isolated city on Cuba's eastern tip. Until a highway from Guantnamo was built through the mountains in the 1960s, the only way to get here was by sea. This bewitching land of cacao and coconuts, mountains and rivers, begs to be explored. The beaches are rocky and wild, not sandy and pretty. Spend your time exploring and eating. People who complain about the food in Cuba clearly never get off the resort. That's poised to change, as tourism officials begin to actively court independent travellers, as well as the all-inclusive crowd.



TORSTAR NEWS SERVICES

5 Bayamo

Wander into Bayamo's stadium during the day — while touring the city in a traditional horsecart — and head to the bleachers to watch players practice, staff spruce up the banners and kids gawk at their heroes. Baseball plays hard to get here. Every town has a stadium, but getting details on games, professional or otherwise, is a challenge. Tickets are cheap but rarely sell out. You can pay double (pennies for locals and dollars for tourists) to sit in the special netted area behind home plate, behind the guy filming the game for TV.

At night, vendors set up tables and stalls outside the gates, and hawk mostly pollo asado (grilled chicken) and roast pork. Get a roast pork sandwich on a soft bun and say 'yes' to a sprinkling of salt. The only thing missing at the game is beer. Apparently it's banned in the interest of players and crowd safety.

TRAVEL NOTES

What you need to know when you go:

Passport

Tourists must have a passport, which should be valid for at least one week after the return date. Anyone planning to work, do business or study in Cuba must have a visa authorized by the Consulate General of Cuba.

Tourist card

Before landing visitors must fill in a tourist card, supplied by their airline, which grants a 90 day stay in Cuba. Do not lose the card. You need to show it when you leave.

Shopping

Shops in hotels, villas and airports sell Cuban cigars, rum and coffee, as well as snacks, arts and crafts, toiletries, books and souvenirs. There are many open-air markets featuring local goods throughout the country. Specialty stores in the main tourist regions also carry high-end European and other imports.

Currency

All goods and services for tourists in Cuba are priced in Cuban Convertible pesos only.

Video and photography

Photos and videos can be taken freely, except in restricted areas, such as military zones. Museums may also have regulations.

Electrical conversion

Cuba's electricity is 110 volts, 60Hz, but most hotels and resorts have 220 volts. Electrical outlets take flat plug prongs.

Clocks

Cuba is on Eastern Standard Time.

Internet

Many hotels and resorts provide a connection, otherwise Wi-Fi is limited to public squares and some hotel lobbies. Buy a 60-minute Wi-Fi card for about \$2.75 Canadian at the airport or your hotel.

Health and insurance

Tourists are required to have travel insurance when visiting Cuba. Insurance can also be obtained when arriving at the airport from Asistur S.A. Many hotels and resorts have doctors on staff or on call. International medical clinics are equipped to handle complex medical conditions.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Diving into biologically rich waters

ADVENTURE

On Sea of Cortez cruise, nature takes centre stage

Tim Johnson
travel@metronews.ca

The mood in the skiff is a little tense, all of us aware that our new little friends can sometimes play a little rough. As we motor out over clear, blue waters toward Los Islotes, a craggy, uninhabited island in the heart of Mexico's Sea of Cortez, the sound is unmistakable, even with the engine on our little craft thrumming away — hearty barks, beckoning us to come join them.

Wetsuits on, we looked up to see two rare blue-footed boobies soar past, their famous feet tucked up tight, nestled into white underbellies. Then it was time for the half-dozen of us to get into the water, a little chilly this time of year.

Within seconds, they come to us, putting on a show — three



A whale shark in the Sea of Cortez passes close to a kayak and a skiff. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

California sea lion pups, adorable, spinning and spiralling past our flippers.

I'm sailing on board the MV Safari Endeavour, a small ship exploring the Sea of Cortez (sometimes called the Gulf of California), the body of water that separates mainland Mexico and the Baja Peninsula. A

UNESCO World Heritage Site and appropriately called the "aquarium of the world" by the famed biologist Jacques Cousteau, this rich marine and avian environment is inhabited by a wide variety of flora and fauna. Big-time plankton blooms and the unique intersection of ecosystems create a place inhabited

by 900 fish species and 32 types of marine mammal, with numerous endemic examples — living creatures found only here.

I'm here with one main purpose in mind: to swim with the massive whale sharks that inhabit these waters.

Doug Coughenour, our captain, says the last exhaustive

nautical survey of the area was carried out back in 1875, by a vessel called the USS Naragansett. Its charts remain the primary tool for his crew today. Commercial craft requiring constantly updated charts, like mega-ships and tankers, do not ply these waters, so the big picture remains something of a mystery.

During the following days, we swim off abandoned beaches and snorkel in waters so clear I can see down dozens of feet, all the way to the colourful coral bottom. At one point, a pod of dolphins surround and leap alongside the ship.

At Bahia Agua Verde, we ride burros brought in by a single family of rancheros along narrow ridge down into an arid valley filled with cacti and coyotes.

And then, on the last full day of the expedition, it's whale shark day. A different kind of nervousness envelopes us as we motor out into the Bahia de La Paz. We've been fully prepared by the ship's crew who, in addition to briefing us on safety and conservation, have warned us over and over again that nothing is guaranteed — these fascinating, huge, spotted crea-

tures (often as big as a school bus) sometimes don't appear.

Wetsuit zipped, fins in place, mask down, it's into the water again. There are calls from our guides that it's coming right at us. A whale shark cruises past a kayak and a skiff, evidence of the wildlife that can be spotted on UnCruise Adventures' Baja's Bounty trip.

A whale shark cruises past a kayak and a skiff, evidence of the wildlife that can be spotted on UnCruise Adventures' Baja's Bounty trip.

I pause, fins still, hanging in the green water as the 7.6-metre shark passes, seemingly impervious to my existence. My heart stopped, I watch it, in parts — first the line of its impossibly wide mouth, then its dazzling spots and stripes and dorsal fin and finally the tail. With its steady back-and-forth motion, I feel like it's waving farewell as it churns its way forward, deep into the green, and on to another destination in the Sea of Cortez.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Tim Johnson was a guest of UnCruise Adventures, which didn't review or approve this story.

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TOP 150

CELEBRATING CANADA'S GIFTS TO THE WORLD

Wall to wall

QUEBEC

Historic barrier built in 1600s still standing today

Sean Plummer

Quebec City's ramparts are an impressive reminder of

Canada's past.

It was the French who started building the walls in 1608 to fortify Canada's main stronghold during its colonial period. The British then built them up even further after the Battle of the Plains of Abraham in 1759.

Today, Quebec City remains the only walled city north of Mexico, and the ramparts are a popular tourist attraction.



Quebec City is the only walled city north of Mexico. ISTOCK

Brrrr, it's cold up here

TORSTAR
FILE PHOTO



In 1947 in the Yukon village of Snag, temperatures reached -63°C. ISTOCK

If you think Canada is cold now, you should have seen it 70 years ago.

On February 3, 1947, the Yukon village of Snag dropped to -63°C, Canada's lowest recorded temperature. That's as cold as the surface of Mars. And that was without the wind chill!

It was so cold that residents said their breath hissed and fell to the ground as white powder. Great White North indeed.

SEAN PLUMMER

Started from the bottom

If he was just known for playing wheelchair-bound basketball star Jimmy Brooks on TV's *Degrassi: The Next Generation*, Aubrey Graham — a.k.a. Drake — would still be a Canadian icon.

used that stardom to promote his hometown.

His 2016 album, *Views*, was one of a handful of records this decade to top the Billboard 200 for six straight weeks. He has also kept busy building up his OVO Sound record label, signing fellow Canadian acts *dvsn* and *PartyNextDoor*; launching his own clothing label; and being named the Toronto Raptors' global brand ambassador.

Then there are his catchphrases, which have caught on worldwide: YOLO ("you only live once") and, especially for Canadians, his rebranding of Toronto as "The Six."

SEAN PLUMMER

But of course, the former Forest Hill resident has gone on to massive international success as a singer and rapper and has

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THIS SPECIAL REPORT WAS CREATED BY CONTENT SOLUTIONS, INDEPENDENT OF METRO EDITORIAL.

The Senators will reportedly host the Canadiens in December in a special outdoor Heritage Classic to mark the NHL's 100th anniversary

Fighting Irish escape upset grip of Tigers



Notre Dame's Austin Torres blocks a shot by Princeton's Steven Cook on Thursday in Buffalo. MADDIE MEYER/GETTY IMAGES

MARCH MADNESS

Another Big Ten team sent home by Middle Tennessee

The Fighting Irish avoided the dreaded upset from a 12th seed in the first round of the NCAA Tournament.

Barely. Bonzie Colson scored 18 points and the West Region's fifth-seeded Fighting Irish avoided a meltdown in the final two minutes to hang on for a 60-58 win over the Princeton Tigers on Thursday afternoon.

After Notre Dame's Matt Farrell missed the front end of a one-and-one with a 59-58 lead, Princeton had a chance to win on its final possession. Devin Cannady missed an open three-pointer, and Notre Dame's Steve Vasturia pulled down the rebound and was fouled.

"We gave everybody a show, right?" Notre Dame coach Mike Brey said. "We escaped. We've been in a lot of games like that where game situations need a big defensive stop. We've been there. I'm proud we're still alive."

Farrell appeared stunned after the game. He wore a scowl as he

nearly left the floor through the wrong exit after Cannady's miss.

Farrell finished with 16 points but in a game the Fighting Irish (26-9) nearly squandered an 11-point second half lead. They also led 59-54 with 1:10 left.

Spencer Weisz led Princeton with 15 points. The Ivy League champion Tigers (23-7) had a 19-game winning streak going into the NCAA Tournament.

"We had a shot," Princeton coach Mitch Henderson said. "Right now, this one hurts. When you're in the locker-room, it's hard to say a proper 'Thank you,' because it feels like goodbye."

“

No matter how it looked, we got the win and that's all that matters.

Notre Dame's Bonzie Colson

At Milwaukee, another 12th-seeded team was able to pull off the upset.

Middle Tennessee took down a Big Ten team in the NCAA Tournament for the second straight year, beating Minnesota 81-72.

Middle Tennessee defeated Michigan State as a No. 15 seed last March.

This time around, the Blue Raiders (31-4) played like seasoned NCAA veterans with the way they held off the Gophers' comeback attempt from a 17-point deficit.

They will move on to face No. 4 seed Butler in the South's second round on Saturday.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



First round in pictures

PHOTOS BY GETTY IMAGES



1 Middle Tennessee, a 12th seed, beat fifth-seeded Minnesota 81-72 for the tournament's first upset.

2 No. 11 seed Xavier ousted sixth-seeded Maryland 76-65.

3 Northwestern edged Vanderbilt 68-66 in its tournament debut.

4 Overall No. 1 seed Villanova defeated Mount St. Mary's 76-56.



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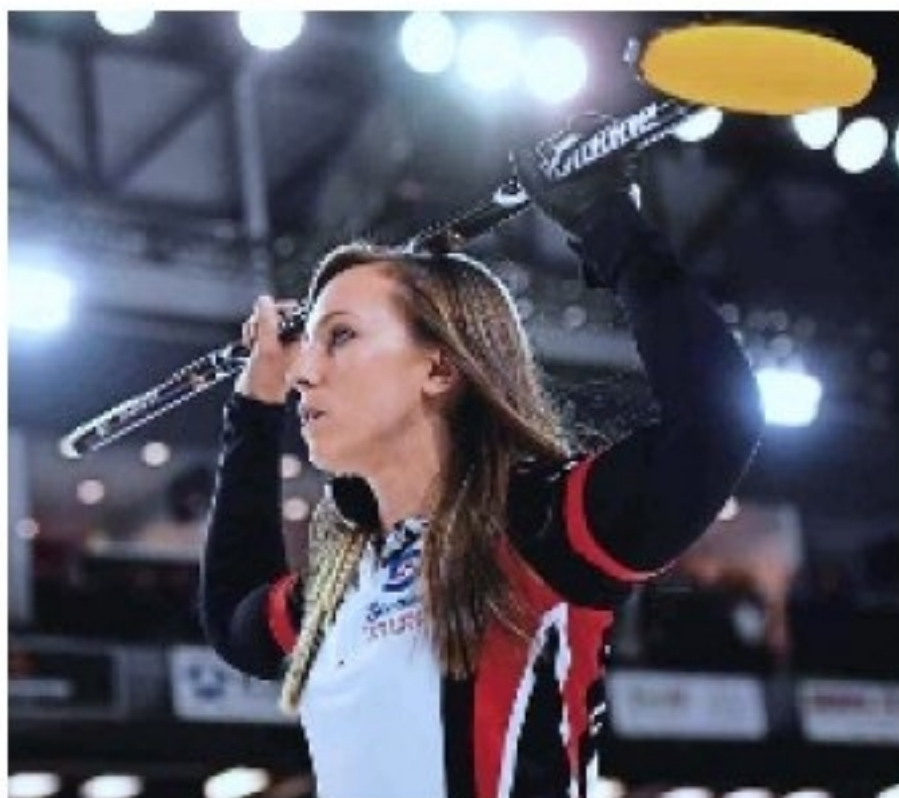
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Rachel Homan's Ottawa rink kicks off the world championship this Saturday in Beijing. SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canada and Homan seek elusive gold

CURLING WORLDS

Local rink keen to better their silver, bronze in Beijing

The next move for Rachel Homan at the women's world curling championship is the top of the podium after silver and bronze medals in previous appearances.

Homan, third Emma Miskew, second Joanne Courtney and lead Lisa Weagle out of the Ottawa Curling Club open the 2017 world championship Saturday against host China in Beijing.

They won the national championship Feb. 26 beating Michelle Englot in an extra end in St. Catharines, Ont. Homan, Miskew, Weagle

and second Alison Kreviazuk were third in their world championship debut in 2013 in Riga, Latvia, and runner-up the following year in Saint John, N.B. Courtney, who will play in her first world championship, was recruited in 2014 after Kreviazuk moved to Sweden.

"We're fairly young for being able to go our third worlds. We have a bit of experience on our side," said Homan.

Winnipeg's Jennifer Jones dominated women's curling at the 2014 Winter Olympics, going undefeated to claim gold. But it's been nine years since Canada won a women's world championship. The 12-hour time

difference from Ottawa means Canada plays their first game at 1 a.m. ET on Saturday.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

"We're fairly young for being able to go our third worlds. We have a bit of experience on our side."

Rachel Homan

IN BRIEF

Scherzer to miss opener
NL Cy Young Award winner Max Scherzer probably will miss the Washington Nationals' opener against Miami on April 3 because of a stress fracture in his right ring finger.

The injury had caused Scherzer to change his fastball grip temporarily.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Grillo leads by three at Arnold Palmer Invitational
Emiliano Grillo of Argentina recovered from a rough start in cold weather by running off seven birdies for a 5-under 67.

That gave Grillo a three-shot lead in the first Arnold Palmer Invitational without the beloved tournament host.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

U.S. women stand pat on boycott intentions

A deadline for the U.S. women's hockey team to decide whether they will boycott the upcoming world championships passed Thursday without players changing their mind in a standoff with USA Hockey over wages.

"We are focused on the

issue of equitable support and stand by our position," the players said in a statement released shortly after 5 p.m. ET. "We continue to be grateful for the encouragement and loyalty of our fans."

The powerhouse U.S. women's program has been

plunged into chaos less than a week before the scheduled start of training camp and just over two weeks from defending its world championship gold medal on home ice in Plymouth, Mich.

Coach Ken Klee was replaced by Robb Stauber ear-

lier this month, and now it's unclear how USA Hockey will fill its roster for a tournament it has won six of the past eight times and was expected to serve as a measuring stick for next year's Olympics, just 11 months away.

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PHOTO: MAVA VISNIE

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada



You need a chocolate-y splurge that will herald the weekend and this skillet cookie rises to the challenge.

Ready in minutes

Prep time: minutes
Cook time: minutes
Serves 4 to 6

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup melted coconut oil (you can also use butter)
- 1 1/2 cups spelt flour
- 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1/4 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp Chinese 5 spice
- 1/8 tsp salt
- 1 egg
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup chocolate chips

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350.

In an 8-inch oven proof skillet, add coconut oil and place it in the oven to melt. Remove skillet and pour out the melted oil into a glass measuring cup, leaving behind enough to grease your pan; set aside to cool.

2. In a medium bowl, whisk the flour, baking powder, baking soda, Chinese 5-Spice and salt. In a separate bowl, whisk the egg and then add the sugars and extract. Stir until blended. Add the coconut oil and mix until blended. Pour the sugar mixture into the flour and mix until combined.

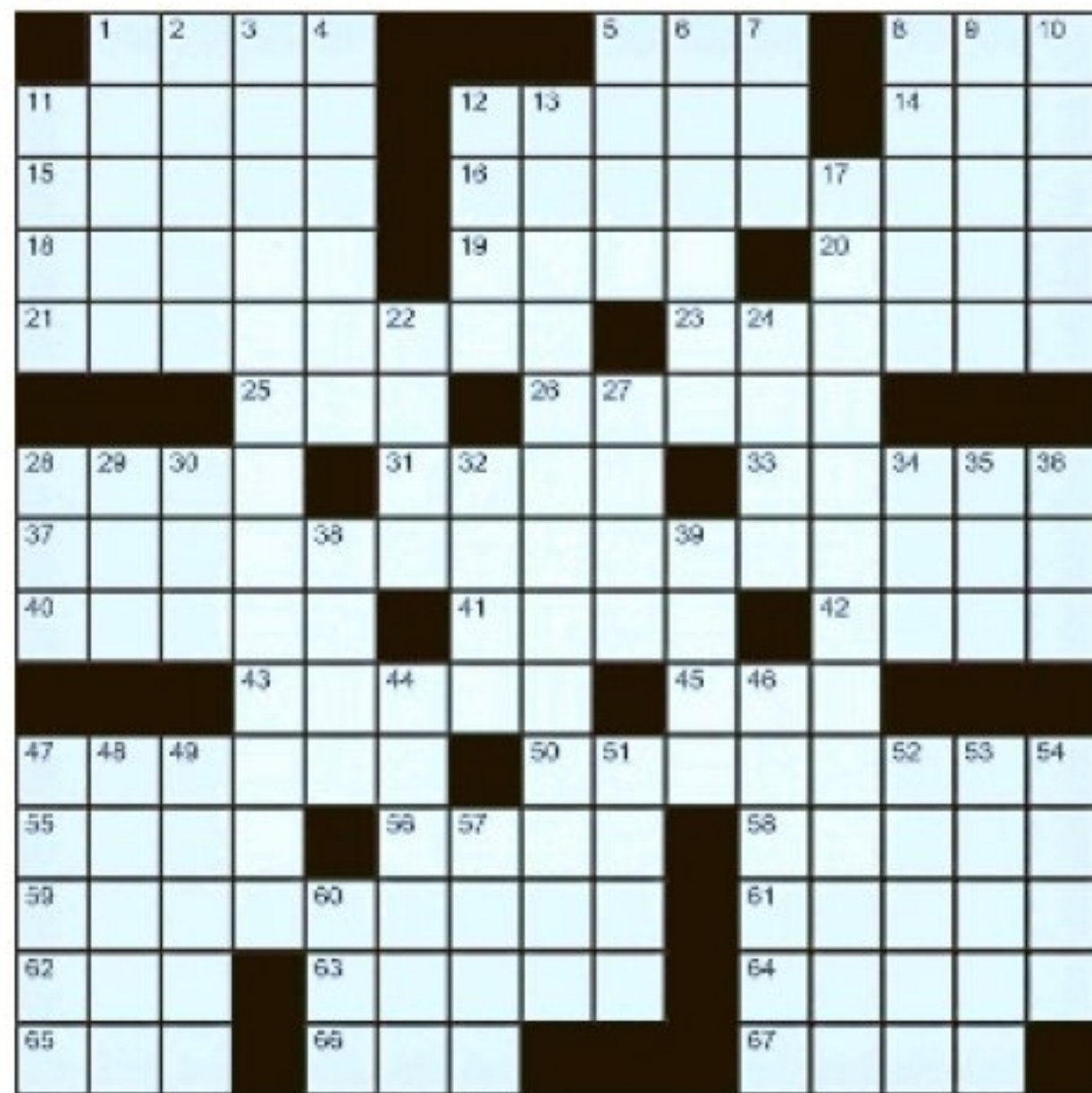
3. Scrape batter into prepared skillet making sure it is evenly distributed. Bake cookie for 18 to 20 minutes or until outer edges are browned and puffed. Let cool in the skillet. Serve in skillet or turn out; cut into wedges.

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ACROSS

1. Vault
5. Initials-sharers of Tina Fey's frequent co-star
8. 'Free' suffix
11. Irish actor Mr. Farrell
12. Attempt
14. Chemical suffix
15. Latin for 'in the meantime' [abbr.]; 2 wds.
16. Effects everlastingness
18. 'Sleep'-meaning prefix
19. Info-finding documents, e.g.
20. Harness
21. Ireland, poetically
23. Isolate, as a stranded castaway
25. 'Earth'-meaning prefix
26. Quizzes
28. 'Ranch' suffix
31. A Doll's House wife
33. Important invention
37. 1911 work by Irish dramatist George Bernard Shaw; 3 wds.
40. Does better than B+; wd. + letter
41. American univ.
42. Not in use
43. Work the eggs in the bowl
45. US politics elephant gr.
47. Run by the other runner again
50. New ___ (Period when archaeological site the Ceide Fields in County Mayo in Ireland



55. "May ___ you a question?"
56. "...___ you want pizza instead?" (Take-out query)
58. Better skilled
59. Potpie morsels; 2 wds.
61. Profits

62. Shiba ___ (Non sporting dog)
63. Some electronics
64. Provide, as with some trait
65. Father
66. Fuss
67. Nutrition amts.

DOWN

1. "Me too"; 3 wds.
2. Out on ___ (Not in one's comfort zone)
3. Book of 1939 by Irish author James Joyce; 2 wds.
4. Complete
5. Buy ___ of dishes (Expand one's

6. Analyzes
7. Prefix with 'thesis'
8. Stupefies
9. Barbara of "Gone with the Wind" (1939)
10. Intervening, in law
11. Money
12. Prefix to 'ferous'

- (Conveying air)
13. Annual parade in March in cities such as Montreal and Toronto; 3 wds.
17. Music group, perhaps marching in an event such as #13-Down; 3 wds.
22. Montreal refusals
24. Food package abbr.; 2 wds.
27. 'Grey' tea
28. Alphabet trio
29. Actress, Charlotte ___
30. Chg. card percentage
32. Beatles: "Two ___"
34. Yore
35. 'Ether' suffix
36. Caustic stuff
38. Derisive cries!
39. Palm starch
44. Crustacean that has 14 legs
46. Hurling siege engine of ancient Rome
47. Unyielding
48. Make money, ___ living
49. Pretension person
51. Flip a coin
52. Village in southeast Saskatchewan
53. Class/sort, in biology
54. Gaelic
57. Home contractor's gig
60. US intelligence org.

* IT'S ALL IN THE STARS Your daily horoscope by Francis Drake

Aries March 21 - April 20
Today will have some challenges, because whatever you do, you will encounter obstacles. You might feel like you're behind the 8-ball. Good luck.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
Your efforts with a group, or perhaps a friend, will be stymied because of some kind of limitation. It could be financial. There's not enough money in the coffers.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
You are high-viz right now. Nevertheless, a partner or close friend might object to what you want to do. This will create problems for you. Easy does it.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
Do not get involved in discussions about religion, politics or racial issues today, because an authority figure will overrule you or shut you down. Just keep a low profile.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
Your plans to investigate how to share or divide something likely will be met with resistance. Not everyone is ready to endorse your ideas. Perhaps you should wait another day?

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
No matter what you try to do to break out of your rut, some kind of barrier will hold you back today. This is a poor day to ask for permission or an endorsement. Don't ask for anything.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
A boss or authority figure at work might squelch your plans. This is why you seem to be world-weary at work today. Just keep on trucking, one day at a time.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Children might add increased responsibility today. Plus, plans to socialize and have fun will be met with obstacles. Something will hold you back.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
This is not a good day to ask for permission or anything from a parent or an older family member. His or her answer will be "Talk to the hand."

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
It's easy to fall into worry mode today. Remember: "Worry is like a rocking chair. It gives you something to do, but gets you nowhere."

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Your finances look a bit bleak today. (Why is there always so much month left at the end of the money?) And so it goes.

Pisces Feb. 20 - March 20
You cannot ignore your duties and responsibilities today. It's just a fact. Don't try to break free. Just suck it up and do what is expected.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9



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